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HIGH TIMES

FEBRUARY 1984

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HIGH TIMES

No. 102 February '84

FEATURES

Cover Photography • Peter Hudson

Interview: John Keel, Part I by Jim Cusimano and Larry Sloman

From snake charmer to UFO investigator, John Keel has done and written about it all. Recognized as one of the world's leading experts on occult, parapsychological and extraterrestrial phenomena, his books have revolutionized the way in which people have come to think about these subjects. In this wide-ranging interview Keel expiates on a life spent tracking down Bigfoot, the Abominable Snowman, the "men in black" and a whole lot of other weird shit

The Right Stuff by "R"

The Connoisseur has been taking one hell of a pounding lately. His call for a freeze on indica and a month-long moratorium on smoking any kind of pot at all has got tokers across the nation screaming for his head. Until now, that is. 'Cause the '83 harvest's just been brought in and a whole mess of new weed is crying out to be sniffed, tasted and evaluated. And that's all the Connoisseur needs to reestablish his reputation, as if he ever really had to

Centerfold: Aloha, Reality

They're Selling Ergotamine Tartrate! by Dean Latimer

"Do you mean to tell us that you would have taught these people, who didn't have the knowledge to make methamphetamine, and given them the necessary precursor chemicals and so on?" "If it had come down to that," Agent Schabillon responded, "I would have went there and made it for them myself." So goes the logic of the DEA's Operation Optimal, the slimy scam to set up drug labs just so they can bust them

Colombian Gold, Excerpt II by Jaime Manrique

"Santiago, don't be such a gringo bore. This place is like ancient Egypt. We're the pharaohs and those dumbfuck peasants do the building for us." Mario was right. The privileged class that dwelt in the mountain palaces above the city of Bogotá were immune to much of what ravaged the rest of the populace—poverty, disease, a brutal and corrupt government. In fact, one could almost forgive them their arrogance, an arrogance which in the Third World passes for hubris.

HIGHWITNESS NEWS

G.I. Piss-test Program Unravels... House Paraquat Hearings Backfire... Pot-trap Sheriff Gets 10 Years... Wave of "Glue Madness" Breaks on British Isles

Trans-High Market Quotations

DEPARTMENTS

Letters	Forum on indica	7
Flashes	A bud in the hand	10
Abuse Folio	Cocaine	30
Bukowski's Notes of a Dirty Old Man	No wing high	66
Case in Point		76
Legal Directory		77
High Times Classified		80
Dope Lore		82
Sounds	Rowland raps	84
Visions	Hello, Ivan	90
Last Words	It is... balloon	98



40 Joe Coleman: Geek Cartoonist

Which is really only part of the story. Coleman is one of the *avantest* of the avant-garde who work the performance-artist beat. Audiences leave a Coleman event shocked, horrified and amazed. (Many times they leave a bit of their dinner on the floor as well.) What's it all mean? Search us. But the man does make a strong impression.

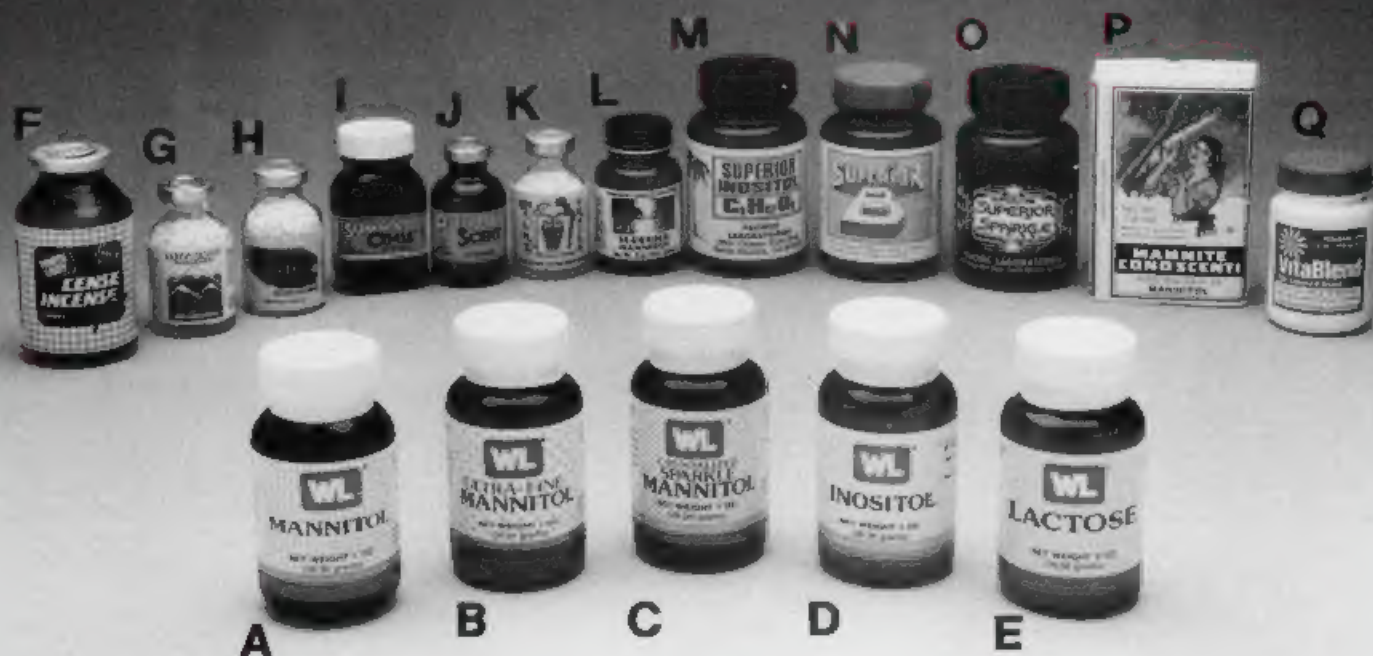
52 Ask Ed by Ed Rosenthal

Now that everyone and their connection has had their say about the indica-sativa controversy, it's time a few simple horticultural facts were stated to put things in perspective. Then maybe we can get down to generating some serious debate on the subject instead of calling each other all kinds of ugly names.



63 Spook Tech 1984 by Mark Swain

Happy 1984 everybody! 'Tis the season to invest in a barrage of spy/counterspy, snoop/antisnoop devices. From lie detectors to bomb detectors and a whole world of countersurveillance apparatus in between, we've assembled a select group of items that reflect the year of Big Brother. Now you can eat scrambled eggs and make scrambled telephone calls all in the privacy of your own kitchen. Plus the true story of Stuart Bodman, spy who couldn't make it back in from the cold.



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A-WL MANNITOL	2.00										9-	17-			30-	50-	
B-WL ULTRA FINE	2.00										9-	17-			35-	70-	
C-WL CRYSTAL MANNITOL	2.00										9-	17-			35-	70-	
D-WL INOSITOL	2.00										9-	17-			35-	70-	
E-WL LACTOSE	2.00											10-				50-	
F-WL CENSE	2.00					25-					110-				475-	900-	
G-ULTRA SCENT	2.00		9-			25-			40-	60-	110-				475-	900-	
H-SUPER SCENT	2.00		9-			25-			40-	60-	110-				475-	900-	
I-SUMMA SCENT	2.00				11-			20-			110-				600-	1000-	
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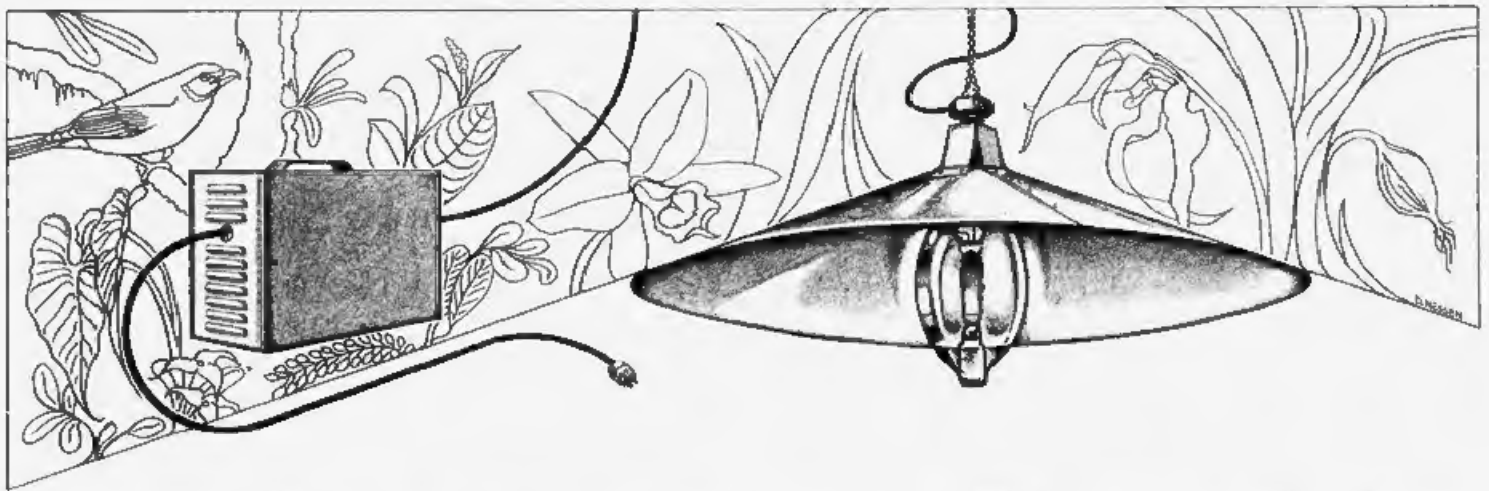
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Because of the overwhelming reader response, we've decided to devote the entire "Letters" section this month to your comments on "R"'s October column which called for a freeze on the growing and smoking of Cannabis indica.

United Accountants

Editor:

"R"'s "Indica Madness" argument [HIGH TIMES, Oct. '83] was the greatest since the candle-makers' petition. It has changed my life and several other people's. I have read your article to other lawyers and CPAs, whose collective smoking experience exceeds a century, and they think you have it nailed on the head. We're mad as hell and won't take it any more.

—CPAs and Lawyers for Sativa
Atlanta, Ga.

"R" Out of Touch

Editor:

I thought I was pissed after I read "R"'s Foreign Herbie Awards [HIGH TIMES, Aug. '83]. Here I sit in the heart of sativa country, smoking Oaxacan bat guano, counting the seconds until my indica hybrids are ripe! As a sativa consumer for fourteen years, and a grower for eight years, I find the "con no sewer's" indica attack offensive. He not only shows insensitivity toward growers by mentioning the law and rip-offs as an afterthought—but he has the gall to call himself the Ralph Nader of the ounce-buying consumer. Is this the same man who picked some off-the-wall fluke called "Thrilla from Manila" for the Foreign Herbies? I know Filipinos that have not heard of it, much less the average ounce-buying consumer. The man has not faced the heartbreak of snow on the Colombian seed crop or the sex reversals, or bud run, etc. . . .

Texas growers understand the need to maintain true breeding sativas. But take it from a grower where sativa seed strains are as common as stretch marks on a hooker's ass. I will never again grow six-foot one-ounce-yield Mexican sativas for sale. Where in the hell was this guy when all Texans had to grow was sativa and the rest of the growing belt was ranting about skunk? It's sad that his elitist position has widened the gap. He no longer represents the consumer or grower. If "R"

wants to address the problem of the lack of good sativas, he should attack the Neanderthal curing methods of sativa-producing countries that render it unsmokable. Meanwhile, ban "R."
—Skunked in Dallas



Smooth as Sativa

Editor:

In spite of Mr. Reagan's stomp-'em-out policy, this year's Alaska harvest went as smooth as sativa.

—Name Indecipherable
Fairbanks, Alaska

Old Man Reefer

Editor:

In response to "R"'s query, the last time I had an interesting, original idea on indica was about an hour ago. A little voice said, "That's enough, Mike; you've been reading 'R"'s jive-ass bullshit and pompous, pedantic drivel long enough: rebut his latest pipe dream:

First, my credentials. Took my first toke in '47—probably before "R" was born. I've smoked it all, ditchweed to Santa Marta—bought it, sold it, ate it, drank it, hid it, found it, puked it, grew it—

"R," the first time I read him some time back, impressed me as an asshole. He has subsequently never written anything to change my initial impression. His latest diatribe is blatant sophistry. Before I begin my rebuttal, I will concede him one—and only one—point: too many people are impressed by the cosmetic aspect of weed, i.e., they plunk down their bread just because it's redhair, or sinsy, or a nice-looking cola. Fuck that, we've all been fooled by pretty faces.

Okay, "R"—You say we should boy-

cott indica solely on the basis that it's too strong and stupefying. Using the same rationale, all booze except beer should be outlawed.

"R" is guilty of falling into the trap that awaits all critics and pseudo-gurus: he has become subjective. So indica knocks him out—so what? Anybody that's smoked even a few joints soon becomes aware of the fact we don't all have the same beta receptors. What he calls two-hit, I call shit; what leaves him cold reveals the universe to me, etc. The same bag of weed, split among ten people, is gonna cause ten distinct, separate highs.

To say, without reservation, that today's indica strains are unfailingly, relentlessly, mind-blowing dope is tantamount to saying all brandy is cognac or all mushrooms fuck you up. And then the ultimate statement of lameness: "... but it does not get you high." Son, you fulla shit.

"R"'s assertion is asinine. Every doper in the world smokes with a certain goal in mind; and they also eventually determine what kind and how much to inhale. The loadies I know can use the same weed; but regulate the intake to achieve the desired effect. That's why people have roaches laying around, for chrissakes.

I'm getting tired of this. If "R" doesn't like indica because it's too strong, that's "R"'s problem—not ours. Hey, "R": keep on driving your model A; some of us like Corvettes.

Fuck you very much—

—Mike Gleeson
San Diego, Calif.

A Pragmatist Writes

Editor:

"R" is fighting a losing battle. This is the '80s and not the psychedelic era of the late '60s, early '70s. People are no longer looking to get high to understand each other. People just want to get "high," period. This isn't the love era. This is the era of looking out for number one. Besides, the people who've been smoking long enough to remember the old days are now all growing their own, and the big growers listen to what the buying public wants. The people buying today are of a whole new generation. I really don't want to say this, "R," but you're nothing but a reminiscing old

/ continued on next page

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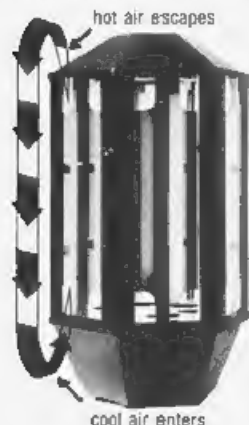
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Calcium	97*	5380
Mg	10*	534
Ph	6.3*	7.1

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LETTERS

/ continued from previous page
fool. It's time for you to step down and let new blood flow. The times have changed, but you haven't. You can't change a multi-billion-dollar industry, so don't waste your effort and breath on dead ears. HIGH TIMES is a magazine for the '80s reader, not people like you who want to back up time. I'm a firm believer in getting high, but for your sake, back off and don't fuck with the changing times.

—K. Murphy

Hollywood, Fla.

Worst Is Best

Editor:

Thank you for your article on indica vs. sativa. I think it was very profound and accurate.

I've sensed differences over the years, and almost always got what I wanted by asking for cheap shit, lowest price, "table shit." Functioning grass. Happy grass. Perhaps the prevalence of indica is what scares a lot of new smokers away—heavy grass can literally cause bummers, minor freakouts.

I'm really grateful for your campaign. Keep up the good work.

—C. Levy

Address withheld

Ahead of His Time

Editor:

Nice article about indica by "R." It's great that someone is finally coming around about indica, the novelty dead-head high. I'd like to let "R" know that there are people like me who have stopped growing it altogether, out of fear of accidentally contaminating the gene pool of the sativa strains. Indica worship has gotten out of hand and it's about time someone addressed the issue. Thank you, "R," once again.

—Name and address withheld

A Matter of Geography

Editor:

I can dig "R"'s position on the over-rating of indica. However, I believe few, if any, growers will heed his request for an indica ban. This has nothing to do with the debate over specific highs. The simple truth is that indica plants mature earlier than sativa. This is an important fact in North-

ern California and Oregon, and for that reason most cultivators there will continue to grow indica strains.

Growers in the Sun Belt areas are in a better position to grow sativa because they can bring it to full maturity. Indoor growers also may successfully cultivate sativa. I would like to see an increase in the production of high-grade sativa, but won't be looking for it to come from Northern California or Oregon, areas that are fast becoming exclusively all indica zones. Congrats, "R," on bringing up a controversial issue.

—El Mafufo Grande
Address withheld

Waiting in the Wings

Editor:

Movie critics are a pain in the ass, and so are self-styled connoisseurs. I suppose "R"'s reason for his inflammatory, pointless Domestic Awards nonarticle in the October issue was just that: to inflame. And show his crystal-clear perception of the obvious. Let's see some credentials, Mister "R"!

In the first place, anyone who has smoked long enough to remember the lost pleasures of Mexican sativa surely must remember when the visuals stopped; when the stone got much heavier. It was with the lousy Colombians, first, but everyone was so enamored with the newfound flavor that they didn't notice they were on the floor. In the second place, the only reason I can see for the existence of strong indica strains in the United States at all is the short growing period. We must have that here in New England, and you can't argue with Californians who want four seasons per year instead of two or three.

And last (and most important), it is unthinkable that every entry to your so-called judging affair could be of pure indica strain. There is more high-tech manipulation of plants happening here than anywhere else, at anytime. We've got some Afghani-sativa crosses in the Nutmeg State that would knock your socks off, and I'm sure we're not alone. Therefore, I hereby call upon the staff of HIGH TIMES to pounce on this lunatic, flush his "Thrilla from Manila" and force him to crank out the long-awaited Domestic Awards. Anybody can taste a dozen or so

/ continued on page 12

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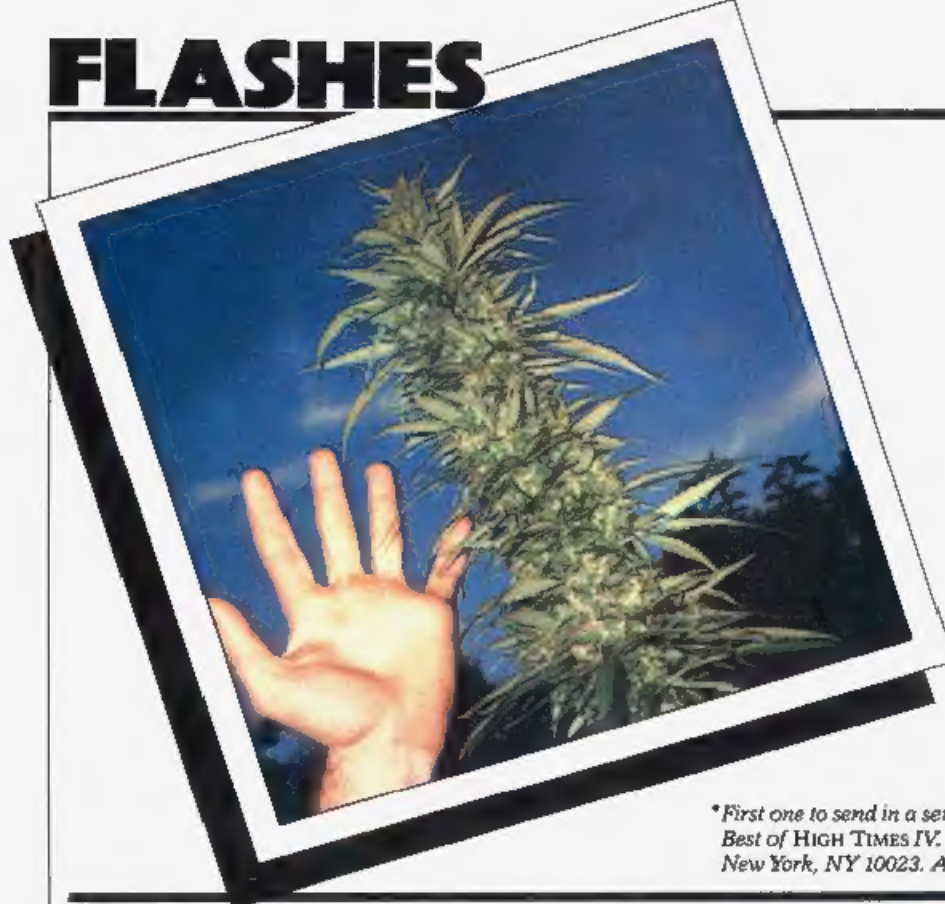
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FLASHES



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*Cum peteret regem decepta satellite dextra
ingessit sacris se peritura focis.
sed tam saeva pius miracula non tulit hostis
et raptum flammis iussit abire virum:
urere quam potuit contempto Mucius igne,
hanc spectare manum Porsena non potuit.
maior deceptae fama est et gloria dextrae:
si non errasset, fecerat illa minus.

—Martial
I., xxi

*First one to send in a semiaccurate translation of Martial's poem gets an issue of the Best of HIGH TIMES IV. Address all entries: Martial, c/o HIGH TIMES, 17 W. 60 St., New York, NY 10023. And you thought Latin was a dead language.

The HIGH TIMES Budding Photographer

This month the accolades fall on an anonymous contributor from the Great North, the creator of this touching Nativity scene. Canadians, as you know, believe that Sergeant Preston, not Jesus Christ, was the Son of God, and that if you've lived a good life the Sergeant takes you up to heaven in his sled. If you've been bad you get ground up into dog food and are eaten by King (not shown). The picture (right) depicts the spontaneous parturition of the Sergeant, whom the Canadians also believe was born fully grown and in uniform, sitting astride his horse. Amen.



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/ continued on page 14



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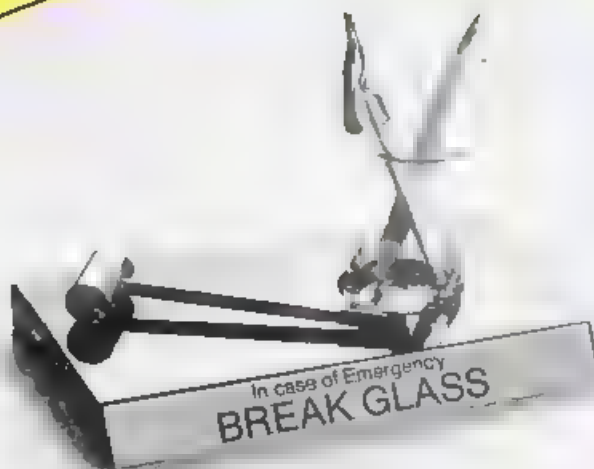
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LETTERS

/ continued from page 9

top-rate varieties and make a decent appraisal. And if "R" won't, I will. Just ask me

—Jim McCarthy
Simsbury, Conn.

Huh?

Editor:

I read the November issue. I have smoked since I was fourteen. I am now thirty-one. Except for a few days here and there, because of sickness or a visit to my grandmother, I have smoked every day. In the last two years my responsibilities have increased (I'm a medical technician), my bills have increased (I'm married and have two kids) and the price and availability of smoke has increased. Two months ago I stopped smoking. For the first time in seventeen years I was on the outside. Great insights came to me about myself and others. My key word to feel high was "munchies." As strange as it seemed, it worked.

I agree with "R" about his indica article also.

—Anonymous

Remembers Doing Things

Editor:

I hear you about the sativa, man. The October piece by "R" brought back some great memories. I been smokin' about twelve years and remember gettin' high and creating things, drawing, going out—you know what I'm talking about. Anyway, I grow a little stash, buy a little and I'd like to get into growing sativa. How about some help?

—Name and address withheld

Sure thing. Look for all the pertinent information in an upcoming "Ask Ed" column.—Ed

"R"'s Future in Jeopardy

Editor:

I'm writing this letter to express my feelings about the outrageous things that your ever-faithful, ever-trusted dope Connoisseur is asking the American growers and smokers to do. I'm referring to his call for a freeze on indica and his asking that we quit smoking altogether for a month. I

/ continued on page 17

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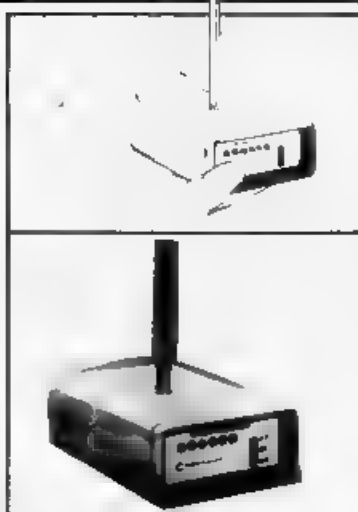
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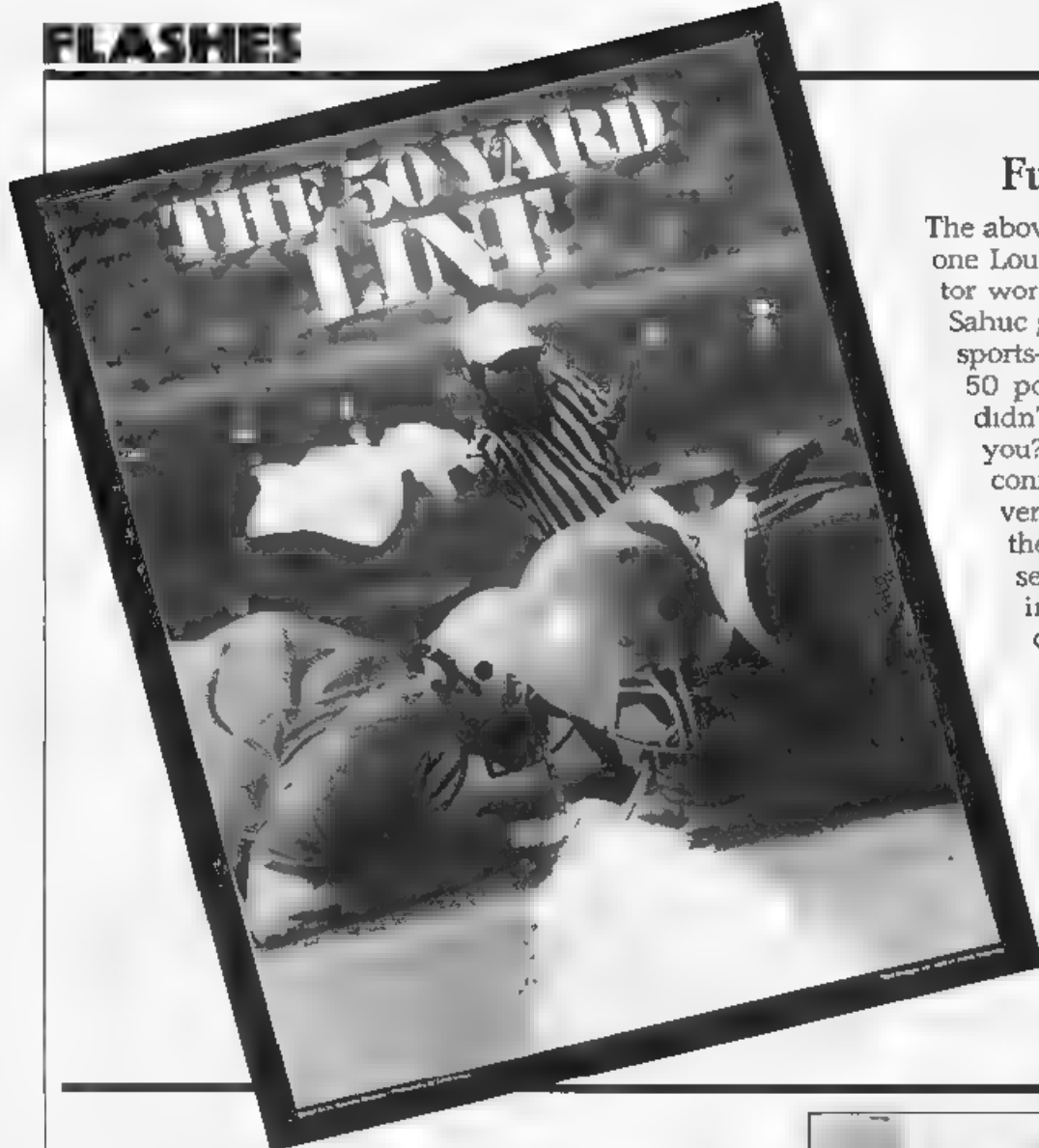
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Send for the Doctor

Not a single dollar sign can be detected in any of Doc Pomus's biggest hits—"Little Sister," "Teenager in Love," "Youngblood" and "Save the Last Dance for Me" are four out of some 70 top-10 tunes he's penned. But he claims the early ones were written for a 15-year-old audience. Today, Pomus writes for adults.

"I look at music one way," states the most prolific R&B songwriter of all. "It's either soulful or not. If it's internal it's great, if it's external it's not great. I can tell where a songwriter has sat with a line for two weeks. To me, any artist who sits there analyzing the lines should be a mathematician instead."

Long before Pomus took off as a songwriter, he was the only white blues singer in America. *Send for the Doctor/Doc Pomus: The early years 1944-55*, on the "Whiskey, Women, and..." label, contains 16 of his early 78s, when he was backed by King Curtis, Mickey Baker and assorted Count Basie band members.

But Pomus had so many songs bursting out of him, he had to write instead. "Real writing is when you have a whole song come out—there will always be bad lines, but that's what makes it real, part of the story."

J A Friedman



Restricted Entry for Uri Hertz L.A. bicentennial poem

Joan Crawford gave great head they said
Going native in the Hollywood Hills
someone puts on his gold lamé jumpsuit
& makes a phonecall to himself in the dark
How pleasant to be a star
moving thru the sky,
See the horns of Moses rising from the ridge
two beams of blue light calibrating the silence,
the photograph of a helicopter
pasted on the horizon outside the poet's window
We passed Orpheus' upturned car
rusting in the ravine
on the way to cactus asylum,
made our peace with the ghosts of cracked swimming
pools
Errol Flynn & Fatty Arbuckle dueling on the cliff edge
as Bugs Bunny jacks off on the glimmering night
somewhere south of Rose
This is the song of the sadly loved,
old torches smoldering w/chemical waste.
this is the hymn of MAX FACTOR
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HOLLYWOOD

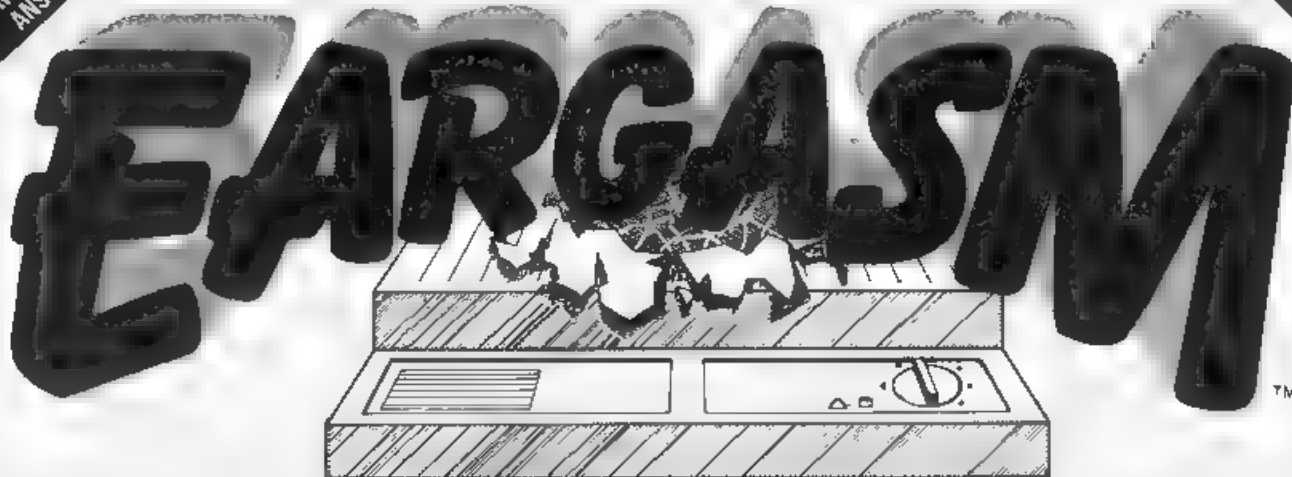
The boy w/ the green hair, Bobby Driscoll,
he spit into the microphone,
laid bare the fly of love, for him this necklace
of lights stretching to New York where he died
in the arms of his agent's doorman
MediCal will pay for your open heart surgery,
send your heartbeat sizzling green
across hospital screens, silver stitches like a zipper
down the windbreaker of human skin
A coyote slinks down Sunset Boulevard,
a grey pelican sails over the shoals of Venice
We remember when our fathers were young,
our memories transmitted thru the medium of water
We bathe again in those Roman baths
Where Mommy heals herself by letting it all go,
the trees dripping w/ Royal Jelly
the cracked mirrors shedding genetic secrets,
the final credits of the human race/
Flying over Los Angeles without a plane
we salute the Grateful Dead waking in the broken dawn,
two hundred years of history summed up in a single song

—Ira Cohen
August 28, 1981
Los Angeles

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Shame, the poet says, is unknown to dogs, Frenchmen and Editors-in-Chief. In response to hierarchical command (and craven pleading), we herewith present the latest installment of **"Roamin' with Sloman."**

*In the midst of flogging his book *Thin Ice* (now in paperback), Ratso takes time out to pose with best-friend country singer turned Broadway composer, Kinky Friedman, and Kinky's steady companion who he would only identify as "Nina." "We're just good friends, really," Kinky protested. "we go shopping together."*



Sloman claims he knows Bill Burroughs, and here's the picture to prove it. Is that a blowup doll, Ratso, or is he just thrilled with your conversation?

They're hot, they're now, they're Ratso's friends. So Sloman took the folk-revivalist group, the Washington Squares, out on the town to his favorite cantina. Don't forget to ask for a receipt, Ratso.



Stephanie Chernikowski



"It's not a party without Ratso," chant Bob, Bob and Baba (Ganesh). The four got together at a recent Soho wingding and exchanged personal mantras.

Mr. Sloman's personal wardrobe courtesy of Goodwill Industries, 136 Bowery, N.Y.

LETTERS

/ continued from page 12

think that "Thrilla from Manila" is fucking up his brain. That is, of course, if he has one, "R" has been a trusted adviser among America's dope society but this time he has gone too far. What makes him think that the growers would even consider a freeze on indica for one full year? What makes him think that there's nobody out there who'd enjoy a bowlful of indica after a hard day's work? And how many people does he think he can convince to stop smoking dope for a month and try getting high off a posthypnotic suggestion? "R," I don't think many people will be heeding your future advice if you keep up this kind of nonsense.

—Jerry Donnelly
Portsmouth, Ohio

Get High, Not Stupid

Editor:

"R"'s column did shock me, but it also excited me. Finally someone is taking up the burden and informing the public of what they're really smoking! Here in sunny Florida, I find *indica* is much liked and the most readily available weed. I have been here four years and still have trouble finding anything other than those pretty, smelly buds. Typically: "Here, man, try some of this skunkweed, it's the best shit you ever had!" and yes, it blew me away, but it also depressed me.

I also find that only a precious few really know the difference between *indica* and the rest, because they don't know any better. I believe that *indica* is ruining Florida's youth because it is the only thing on the market and the wooden-headed high obliterates their ambition and creativity. I am a musician, and pot is an integral part of my creativity; I'm tired of being stoned stupid.

So, for these reasons I'm going to help you in your crusade against *indica* by letting the pot-smoking public of Florida know that they're not getting high, just stupid. I may not be as influential as you, but I do know a handful of dealers and they are already complying by searching for different bud—so you are not alone! This is something that must be done

—"E"

Daytona Beach, Fla.

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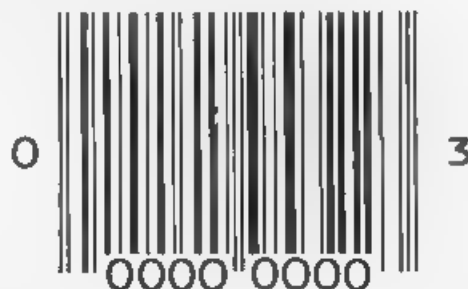


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G.I. PISS-TEST PROGRAM UNRAVELS

GLUT OF GLITCHES PLAGUES BILLION-DOLLAR BOONDOGGLE

by Dean Latimer

NEW YORK CITY

"YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND, it's like a big family," army spokesperson Margaret Tackley told *HIGH TIMES* two years ago, when we called their Washington press office to inquire how they were setting up their marijuana mass-urinalysis program. "When there's some problem in the family, we like to take care of it ourselves, inside the family. We don't tell everyone all about it." Those were her words, verbatim.

Over the last two years, that family has been positively on the rack because of that piss-test program—along with the navy, the air force and the Marine Corps' families. And now that the entire Defense Department's mass-testing program has been shown to be entirely hay wire, the very secrecy under which it was engineered in late 1981 should keep legal investigators and muckraking journalists prying merrily away at it for years to come.

Puddles of Deceit

At this writing, only 7,000-some armed-services personnel have had their service records expunged of fraudulent "drug abuse" charges stemming from the Defense Department's piss-testing program. But those 7,000 are sure to be followed by "tens of thousands" more, predicts attorney Mark Waple of Fayetteville, North Carolina, who is responsible so far for clearing nine army personnel at Fort Bragg of piss-test charges (see Case in Point, page 76). "It's hardly the beginning, even," says Waple in some astonishment over Defense's incredible snafu. "And in my opinion—and I think I'm a pretty good attorney—every one of these people has solid potential grounds for suing the government for slander and defamation, just to start with."

The Fayetteville firm of Hutchins and Waple specializes in military law, so it was to them that 31 Fort Bragg soldiers went last spring, to ask for guidance in their marijuana-test difficulties. The brass at Bragg, like those at every other American military installation around the world, mutated a wholesale piss-testing program in late 1981. Every few weeks, first thing in the morning, a random selection of bottom-rank personnel would be singled out—a barracks floor, a work detail, a training class, a mess unit—for "sur-



AP said these two Fort Bragg grunts were glad to be back from Grenada, but we suspect the G.I. on the right has actually just learned his pot piss test came up negative

prise" piss tests. The boys and girls would be hustled into latrines, with no warning, first thing in the morning, and compelled to "furnish urine specimens" while guards watched closely to make sure no one dropped salt in the sample cups, to confound the assay devices. (Just a couple grams of salt will suffice, so they watched very closely.) The samples were spirited away to parts unknown, and weeks or months later, people who'd pulled positive for any "drugs of abuse" would be presented with a choice: either accept a "non-judicial punishment" of some unspecified sort, or opt for a full court-martial.

This did not conduce to the finest morale Fort Bragg had ever seen, somehow. The testing method used was said to be able to pick up telltale pot traces in urine, for as long as two weeks to two months, after inhalation of even a whiff of someone else's *sidestream* smoke. Some people tried for total abstinence, even off duty and on leave, though that is not what most young people have in mind when they enlist with Uncle Sam. Others tried all sorts of harebram "flushout" schemes, cramming themselves full of salt tablets and cranberry juice and vinegar after each smoking session (a useless and potentially dangerous resort). But most just said to hell with it, smoked dope and took their chances.

It seemed to make little difference what one did, by all accounts. Known dopers and nondopers seem about equally likely (or unlikely) to pull pot positives after any given piss sweep at any installation, service mail to *HIGH TIMES* has consistently shown. At Bragg, as everywhere else in the armed services, the first few months of mass testing saw some pretty heavy discipline. People lost stripes, were sectioned out of favored duties and classes onto shitwork details,

were fined half their pay for months running, and were compelled to attend asinine "drug education-and-prevention programs." But it didn't happen to everybody—mainly only to people already in disfavor with their immediate superiors. And before the first year was out, hardly anybody was pulling penalties any heavier than a permanent "drug abuse" citation on their military records. In this way, the brass at least could officially declare that something promising was obviously happening on the marijuana-abuse front at Bragg. The incidence of pot-smoking penalties had gone way down, hadn't it?

But the incidence of permanent drug-abuse blots on people's service records was going through the roof by the end of the first year of mass testing. Such citations can severely impair one's future civilian career, imperiling prospects for G I loans and retirement and medical benefits, and hampering one's credit opportunities just as badly as a civil drug-abuse conviction.

Billion-Dollar Snafu?

However, even court-martials that resulted in convictions—such as a piss-test case in the Galveston Coast Guard Group in Texas, defended by Houston NORML attorney Ed Mallett—have generally pulled *really* minimal penalties. "My man told me he'd never smoked marijuana in his life," Mallett tells *HIGH TIMES*, "and I would know if he was lying to me, and he wasn't. But he wouldn't let me raise the possibility at trial that he'd inhaled someone else's potsmoke by accident, because he wouldn't risk having to inform on any of his potsmoking friends in the Galveston Group. So he got convicted, and they sentenced him to one hour's extra work every night for a month. He got *less* of a penalty than the Coast Guard people who choose captain's-mast nonjudicial penalties. So we just *about* won it for him, in effect, even though he tied my hands on a passive-inhalation defense."

The uniformed brass, obviously, were seriously troubled over this whole piss-test project. It had been literally *lobbied* into the services in 1981, over the fiercely vocal objections of many thoughtful professional military administrators, by an assortment of civilian new-Right special-interest groups who enjoyed copious "charitable" funding from the very corporations which *merchandised* the new pot-testing technology.¹ Once the piss-test program was formally initiated throughout the global armed-services establishment, of course, *some* local base commanders turned out to be real hotdogs on this issue of "marijuana abuse." Most of them took a realistic view of potsmoking and minimized the piss-test penalties as much as possible; but some—like the Fort Bragg brass—set a policy of fucking over suspect-

ed potsmokers as savagely as possible.

What a lot of these local, on-the-spot brass did not fully apprehend—although it was agonizingly obvious to the central piss-program coordinators in the Pentagon itself—was that none of the piss tests *they* were using were any good at all. The base commanders merely employ preliminary diagnostic screening tests: either the "Roche Abusescreen THC" or the "EMIT Cannabinoid Assay"—simple and inexpensive immunoassay gimmicks which were originally designed for "pure research" purposes, and which can only "presumptively" indicate that a person may have 9-carboxy-



Gas Chromatography like this, used to confirm "screening" results, won't stand up in court.

THC traces in his or her urine. Unfortunately, these portable piss-test kits were enthusiastically overbilled by their merchandisers when they first went on the commercial market in 1981; and although their merchandisers were subsequently careful to stipulate that their gimmicks *really aren't* worthy

of consideration as forensic, guilt-determining devices, many military commanders still ignorantly believe the original misleading ballyhoo.

But the Pentagon brass, in an attempt to back up these inadequate screening devices with *genuine* forensic tests, have dug a truly bottomless pit for themselves. The reason thousands of service personnel are suddenly being cleared of long-standing piss-test charges is not simply because the screening tests were inadequate to accuse them of anything in the *first* place; it's because the backup tests were inadequate to confirm the screening tests, even though the DOD has spent millions of tax dollars on them. And the sum of misspent money will surely rise into the billions before it's all over—if indeed it's ever all over.

The Whole Piss-Test Protocol

When the EMIT and Roche tests went into use in the armed services in 1981, Pentagon spokespersons methodically misled the public as to their accuracy and how they would be used. Prime-time network correspondents were assured by heavily bemedaled generals and admirals that the tests were "Ninety-nine point nine percent accurate," even though the DOD's own in-house accuracy appraisals had already secretly rated them as low as 40 to 60 percent accurate (and the ratings haven't gotten any better). The media were also assured that all service personnel would be rigorously piss-tested, and that any *officers* pulling positive results for pot, even once, would be instantly discharged. Obviously pleased with this get-tough, no-nonsense crackdown talk, the

(continued on page 24)

9-CARBOXY-THC: THE WEAKEST LINK

THE PARTICULAR END PRODUCT OF MARIJUANA which is necessarily sought by all marijuana urine tests is totally inactive in the human body, and in the mind. "Nine-carboxy THC" is one of nearly a dozen compounds into which delta-9 THC—the sole active ingredient in marijuana—is turned after the process of metabolism and deactivation by the liver. Only one of these "metabolites" is in any way psychoactive: 11-hydroxy THC, which is eliminated, like unchanged delta-9 THC itself, in feces. Neither delta-9 THC nor 11-hydroxy THC even show up in human urine after the ingestion of marijuana. The only metabolites that show up in urine are 9-carboxy THC and an assortment of other "polar acids," none of which exert any biological or psychotropic effects while they're in the body. But since 9-carboxy THC is the only marijuana metabolite that shows up in urine in any measurable quantity, it is the metabolite "targeted" by all marijuana urine tests.

The determination that 9-carboxy THC has no psychotropic activity was made at

the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1982, and is reported on page 623 of *The Journal of Pharmacological Therapy*, May 1982, vol. 31, no. 5: "Comparison of effects of marijuana cigarettes of three different potencies," by Dr. Mario Perez-Reyes, Stephanie DiGuseppi, et al. Briefly, the researchers injected human volunteers intravenously with doses of pure 9-carboxy THC equivalent to *four times* an ordinary intoxicating dose of delta-9 THC, and observed no reaction at all. The subjects did not become intoxicated, nor was there any physical reaction whatsoever.

Thus, the presence of 9-carboxy THC in urine, at any level, is inadequate to show "impairment" or intoxication by marijuana. Since this wholly inactive metabolite remains detectable in urine for longer than 21 days after a single exposure to marijuana smoke—and since exposure to marijuana smoke can occur accidentally, involuntarily and unknowingly—no urine test for pot will ever be able to prove voluntary "use" of marijuana.

¹"The Golden Swindle," Latimer, D., *High Times*, November 1981.

HOUSE PARAQUAT HEARINGS BACKFIRE

CRITICS ARE NOT SILENCED; HERBICIDE IS NOT EXONERATED

by Charles Winston-Levy

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHEN THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME of the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee held a hearing in early October on government plans to spray the herbicide paraquat on U.S. pot fields, nothing went quite according to plan. By the time the day's proceedings were over, it was embarrassingly obvious that organizers of the event had attempted to orchestrate a program of testimony favorable to the use of paraquat. But most of the witnesses, constrained by a desire to transmit the truth as they knew it, failed to present anything like a clean bill of health for the herbicide; and a number of witnesses, who had been denied their right to speak, got their message out to the press corps anyway.

The entire hearing, it now appears, had been designed to assuage the misgivings of the Colombian government, whom the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has been trying for years to interest in a massive paraquat/eradication project. Representatives of the Colombian embassy sat unacknowledged in the audience, listening to the testimony of "experts," while committee chairman Rep. William J. Hughes (D-N.J.)



Rep. William J. Hughes

tried desperately to cast paraquat-spraying in the best possible light.

The first speaker of the day was Dr. Carlton Turner: former government pot farmer, now White House drug adviser, who holds a patent on a paraquat-testing kit for pot users. Turner attempted to paint paraquat as a sort of therapy for treating the "health problem" of marijuana. In support

of this notion, he cited and recited—in his now-standard litany of marijuana horror stories—thoroughly discredited "scientific" evidence that pot interferes with brain and reproductive functions. He acknowledged that five or six people die of paraquat poisoning every year, worldwide, but most of these, he argued, were suicides, and "we don't live in a sterile society." One of Turner's more innovative rhetorical flourishes was to compare the number of paraquat deaths to those resulting from the use of various medicines like penicillin and aspirin. This lethally poisonous chemical, he seemed to imply, was virtually a benign antibiotic.

DEA assistant administrator Frank Monastero succeeded Turner on the program, offering the view that paraquat spraying was the least labor-intensive method of eradicating marijuana in the United States. He did not outline for the committee the restrictions placed on paraquat spraying by federal courts, or explain that when used in compliance with the letter of the law (which requires hand-eradication after spraying), paraquat is the *most* labor-intensive and *least* cost-effective tool for attacking the pot crop. He admitted, however, the 'quat program was "temporarily restrained by judicial decree," implying that this was merely a momentary snag.

When the next witness, Dr. William Foege, director of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, took the microphone, the rehearsed program began to come apart. Foege was more than willing to acknowledge marijuana itself as a serious health problem, and noted that the CDC had not found a single case of paraquat-induced lung-fibrosis among pot smokers since small quantities of 'quat-tainted pot had first begun to be imported from Mexico in the late 1970s. However, he also described at length the difficulties in monitoring the effects on pot smokers of long-term consumption of paraquatted marijuana, stating finally that "it might well be impossible" to accurately determine, scientifically, whether potheads were suffering lung damage from paraquat.

Foege, who had not himself participated in the CDC's research on paraquat, then ceded the microphone to Dr. Philip Landrigan of the U.S. Public Health Service, who had reviewed the entire paraquat phenomenon in the July 1983 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*. Landrigan told the congressmen that, in his considered judgment, paraquat had caused the deaths of 3,000 to 5,000 human beings and was a genuinely dangerous substance. While CDC



Kevin Zeese

hadn't recorded any paraquat-marijuana deaths, neither did they have any adequate means of discovering whether any such deaths had occurred. Under questioning from committee members, he testified that researchers at CDC still held, as they had since the late 1970s, that smoking paraquatted marijuana was likely to induce lung fibrosis. No matter how many ways Chairman Hughes rephrased his questions, he could not seduce Landrigan into saying anything nice about the herbicide.

When the session broke for about half an hour for the congressmen to meet other obligations elsewhere on Capitol Hill, the assembled press corps took the opportunity to balance their coverage by addressing some hostile questions to Carlton Turner who had remained in the hearing room:

"How is it, Mr. Turner, that your assessment of paraquat conflicts so strongly with that of the CDC researchers?"

"Well, I'm a researcher, too."

"Dr. Turner, you mentioned that sixty thousand people a year sought medical treatment for marijuana problems. Doesn't that figure include everyone who reported consuming marijuana in combination with other drugs?"

"Those figures are from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. You'd have to ask them."

"Isn't it true that you hold a patent on a home-testing kit for paraquat and stand to profit from a paraquat scare?"

"Well, er, um, individuals can't own patents. Only organizations can. My name is on a University of Mississippi patent, and they would get the profit. I wouldn't see a penny."

"Are you sure?"

It went on like that. The press doesn't like paraquat any more than NORML does.

Meanwhile, NORML national director Kevin Zeese was enjoying himself no end. He had distributed a press release around the room, charging Chairman Hughes with staging a "phony" hearing by refusing to allow testimony from NORML or any of the environmental groups that had opposed the paraquat spraying in national forests earlier in the fall (see HIGHWITNESS NEWS, Dec. '83). Many of the reporters tossing questions at Turner clutched the NORML releases in their hands as they spoke. And off in another corner, Jay Feldman, a spokesman for the Coalition against the Misuse of Pesticides (CAMP), was holding his own little press conference, raking the Reagan administration over the coals and giving reporters a crash-course in the perils of paraquat.

As the media people drifted off to file their stories, Turner jovially greeted Kevin Zeese, placing his hand paternally on the NORML director's shoulder. He removed it when Zeese accused him of lying to the committee.

A few moments later Turner and environmentalist Jay Feldman came face to face in the doorway. Still eager to fraternize with the opposition, Turner shook Feldman's hand good-ole-boy fashion. "Good to see ya," he drawled. "Ya know, we don't disagree all that much philosophically. I love to fish. I just lo-ove to fish."

When the hearing reconvened, Rep. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), who had up to this point maintained a skeptical silence, violated the mood of rehearsed decorum that had pervaded the earlier session. The entire morning's dialogue, he said, had had a "surreal" quality. Supposedly expert speakers were contradicting each other on virtually every cogent point, and he wanted to clear up a few things. At the break, a lawyer from the Sierra Club had told him of the DEA's agreement in court to file an environmental impact statement (EIS) before any more aerial paraquat spraying would be done in the United States. Monastero had just testified that the DEA was only considering

such a step. Who was telling the truth?

Monastero consulted a DEA attorney seated behind him and reaffirmed that the EIS was simply "under consideration." The Sierra Club attorney, asked by Schumer to respond, stood up in the audience to say Monastero was wrong. Schumer just shook his head.

He then asked Monastero how the DEA would ultimately like to proceed with the

"That's an awful small capsule," Sawyer observed.

"That's the problem," Dr. Carlton Turner affirmed authoritatively.

Next up on the agenda were two representatives of the Chevron Chemical Company, manufacturers of paraquat, and, predictably, they had nothing negative whatever to say about their company's product. They did explain enough about the techniques of

The whole purpose of the hearing was to convince the Colombians in the audience that paraquat spraying was perfectly acceptable in the United States, and therefore acceptable elsewhere.

paraquat program. Hedging a little, Monastero replied that the agency wanted to "accomplish a situation like the one in Mexico." (In 1977, the only year in which the environmental impact of the spraying was studied, 65,000 acres of Mexican land were "inadvertently" paraquatted, because of wind drift away from target areas.) Well, then, Schumer wanted to know, how would they prevent the 'quatted pot from being harvested? They would spray the plants while they were too young to harvest, Monastero answered. No one asked how these "young" plants could ever be identified from the air. Schumer just shook his head.

Rep. Harold Sawyer (R-Mich.) was much confused as well by what he'd been hearing. He really wanted to know why people were so up-in-arms over spraying paraquat on pot if, as Turner had testified, the stuff was sprayed on all kinds of food products, from tomatoes to corn to lima beans, and so on. Lima beans had protective husks, Turner explained, but as for the rest of those veggies, he had to admit he didn't know. Of course, Turner, who's been 'round the horn on this issue more than once, *did* know that paraquat is sometimes sprayed to defoliate before planting, and sometimes sprayed on the ground around covered plants, but never on food crops themselves. Turner wasn't about to say that though; it was much easier to let Sawyer think these objections to paraquat were pure obstructionist nonsense.

Sawyer also asked why they didn't just put some kind of "marker" in the paraquat so that people would know when their pot was contaminated with it. Turner said it had been tried, but none of the markers had proved feasible. He confided, however, that a new marker—consisting of minute capsules that would burst and stink to high heaven when a smoker lit up a joint—was being studied.

"A capsule that would go through that little nozzle?" Sawyer asked.

"Yes," Turner replied.

using it, however, to enlighten Representative Sawyer on the tomato issue. And they did say they had done no research, and could not testify, as to its toxicity for marijuana smokers.

By the time the last panel of witnesses was introduced, the audience had dwindled to almost nothing; the media contingent was down to a few dedicated stragglers; and only three subcommittee members, Hughes, Sawyer and Rep. Clay Shaw (R-Fla.), remained. The last three witnesses, gray academics (two pesticide specialists and a professor of agriculture), droned on inaudibly for the last 45 minutes or so, and the hearing faded away to adjournment.

Through all of it, Chairman Hughes had repeatedly interjected reminiscences of his recent trip, with the House Select Committee on Narcotics, to the coca- and pot-growing areas of Peru, Colombia and Jamaica. He said that if his colleagues could only see the vast, inaccessible fields of *marimba* and *ganja* growing in those countries, they would realize the necessity of herbicide-spraying there. If paraquat spraying wasn't approved in the United States, how would we ever "gain any credibility with our neighbors to the south," he begged to know.

That, of course, was the unspoken reason for these hearings: to show those southern neighbors that paraquat was perfectly acceptable in the United States, and therefore acceptable elsewhere. That's why NORML and the environmental groups had been refused the right to speak. The "message to Colombia" motive for the spraying here has been openly and repeatedly stated by State Department and DEA spokesmen. Paraquat never was and never will be a practical method for eradicating pot in the United States.

Why was this issue never raised by any of the congressmen? When asked that question during a break in the hearings, a temporary staff member of the committee answered candidly, "The committee members

/ continued on page 26



Rep. Charles Schumer

POT-TRAP SHERIFF GOES DOWN FOR A DIME

HOUSTON, TEXAS

FORMER SHERIFF JAMES ("HUMPY") Parker, the man who administered the infamous "marijuana trap" on U.S. Highway 59 in San Jacinto County (see Highwitness News, June '83), has pulled 10 years in prison and \$12,000 in fines for torturing jail inmates. For more than five years "Humpy" and his chief lieutenants had virtually financed the county on money they extorted from motorists passing through the area. Law enforcement in San Jacinto County was taken over by state police last year after details of the shakedown were revealed by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department.

Parker was convicted, along with former deputies John Glover and Carl Lee, after a three-week trial in which six witnesses testified that they had all been victims of the same water torture at the hands of the defendants. Having bound their hands, deputies had poured water onto towels wrapped

around their faces until they confessed in order to avoid drowning.

At the sentencing in late October, Federal District Judge James DeAnda remarked, "The operation down there [in San Jacinto County] would embarrass the dictator of a country." In justification of dispensing the longest sentence to Parker, he added, "You were the person who orchestrated the series of offenses." John Glover was given two years, plus a three-year suspended sentence, and Carl Lee was sentenced to seven years. Both must remain on probation for an additional five years beyond that.

Another, younger, deputy, Floyd Baker, who had his case severed from the others when a mistrial was declared on his behalf, was to be tried later; his case was not resolved at press time. Ironically, Baker's defense counsel, by court appointment, is Houston attorney Ed Mallett, an active member of the National Legal Committee of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), and Mallett has told HIGH TIMES he plans

to defend Baker as vigorously as he would any other client.

Parker and several other defendants have yet to stand trial on additional civil-rights charges stemming from a long list of false arrests made during the heyday of the Highway 59 pot trap. During that time San Jacinto County deputies would stop cars driven by longhairs or nonwhites, or anyone from outside the county, and conduct unwarranted drug searches. If they found no drugs they would plant some, or trump up other charges and extort fines, bail money, towing fees, etc., from the victims. Generally the "crimes" were not recorded, and much of the revenue, prosecutors allege, was kept by sheriff's-office personnel.

Several months before his trial Parker had pleaded guilty to torture and civil-rights charges in exchange for a mere three-year sentence and a \$15,000 fine. However, the federal judge then hearing the case refused to accept so lenient an arrangement and the former sheriff was forced to face trial.

WAVE OF 'GLUE MADNESS' BREAKS ON BRITISH ISLES

STRATHCLYDE, SCOTLAND

"SOLVENT MADNESS," THE current wave of media hysteria over an alleged epidemic of glue-sniffing among children in the British Isles, appears to be peaking handsomely. Parents are up in arms, shopkeepers are panicked, the police are boasting to the media about their efficiency in stemming the deadly plague—and children, already supposedly at special risk of falling into glue addiction, are now subject to compulsory "therapy" in Scotland if they get caught doing the stuff.

In fact, under Scotland's special Solvent Abuse Act of 1983, kids can be forced into "compulsory care" if someone merely tells the police they've been sniffing glue. "We rely on information from family, friends and neighbors," boasts Strathclyde police superintendent Max Frood, adding: "We're trying to help these children, not convict them."

The new glue law was passed by the Edinburgh Parliament

largely on the basis of scare statistics cooked up by ultra-conservative scaremongers like Glasgow M.P. David Marshall, who first proposed the glue act to Parliament. For example, while only 2,240 glue-sniffing incidents were reported to the Scottish police in 1979, Marshall notes, the figure rose to 3,300 in 1981. The glue scare's promoters make much of this

dropping into the Forth-Clyde canal for no apparent reason. The figures we see are the tip of a very nasty iceberg."

In the United States, by comparison, federal health agencies report no deaths at all, at any age, directly attributable to glue alone in 1982. But the children of the United States are supposedly cursed with marijuana addiction, not glue-

sniffing stamped out the better." He did not mention that many brands of airplane glue are actually sold in polyethylene bags, like most other retail commodities—or what a shopkeeper is supposed to do, exactly, if a customer orders glue and plastic bags together.

Glue-sniffing in Great Britain is largely identified with the skinhead, "punk" rock culture. Skinheads are blatant and ostentatious in their public sniffing of glue, largely because it draws copious media attention for them. Parents, universally horrified at the ever-present threat that their children may turn into skinheads, are prime suckers for this solvent-madness campaign.

Therefore, the John Menzies department-store chain (roughly equivalent to Woolworth in the United States) is also getting considerable media attention just now, for its exertions against youth glue-sniffing. The 250 Menzies stores in Scotland, England and Wales now refuse to sell glue to anyone under the age of 18, whether they're hobbyists or not.

"These kids are walking under buses, falling out of windows..."

increase—without mentioning that their own scare campaign, which began in 1979, was really a major factor behind the rise in police reports.

According to the scare's promoters, glue actually kills children. Glue killed no fewer than 14 children in Scotland in 1982, they allege. "And that doesn't include some strange accidents to youngsters high on glue," a Glasgow social worker told the *London Sunday Times* (now a Rupert Murdoch tabloid). "These kids are walking under buses, falling out of windows or

sniffing

Like the American anti-marijuana political charade, "solvent madness" puts the blame for youth-doping largely on small private shopkeepers, lending the police broad latitude for putting people they don't like out of business. "We've come across cases of shopkeepers actually selling children glue-sniffing kits, tubes of Evostik along with polyethylene bags," charges a Strathclyde Regional Council addiction officer. "That kind of thing is appalling and the sooner it can be

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HIGHWITNESS NEWS

MILITARY PEE

/ continued from page 20

idiot media never bothered to determine the truth, that only personnel of noncommissioned rank would be piss-tested at all systematically, and that it was completely up to the individual discretion of base commanders as to what sort of adverse action would be taken against persons who pulled drug positives.

An indication of the truth was provided early last summer, when the Department of the Navy first determined that 7,000 personnel had been unrightfully accused of drug abuse on the basis of faulty procedures at only two of their five regional test labs. Since less than half of these people had been disciplined at all—even to the point of getting a drug-abuse blot on their service records—the navy only had to send out some 3,000 letters advising the victims that they could file for total restitution of all piss-test penalties levied against them. "Of course we haven't found all those people yet," a navy spokesman tells *HIGH TIMES*. "But we're looking for them," he pledges.

As far as can currently be determined, the whole piss-test program was intentionally set up by the Pentagon to be as confusingly haphazard and Byzantine as possible. Since policies differ wildly among the four service branches, and since individual base and group commanders are given virtual carte blanche to devise their own screening and discipline policies, no succinct description can be given of exactly how the piss program works, as a whole. Certain installations like the army's Ft. Bragg have had no end of trouble with mass piss-test discipline binges, while other installations—most Marine Corps bases, significantly—have hardly had any trouble at all. Though this could suggest that fewer marines smoke pot than army grunts, it much more likely indicates that top-rank Marine Corps administrators have sensibly advised their base commanders to soft-pedal this fishy piss-test business.

And it is a very fishy business indeed, as this monumental snafu with the "confirmatory" lab procedures demonstrates. The fiasco proceeds out of a whole lot of pseudo-scientific mumbo jumbo that was obviously laid on the Pentagon planners by some swift-talking civilian "drug-abuse consultants"—who won multimillion-dollar contracts for the private lab firms they were representing, and then left the Pentagon and the taxpayers holding the bag.

The telltale "marijuana metabolite," which all these piss-test procedures seek in human urine, may not be the least bit active in the human body, but it certainly does have a great deal of staying power. "Nine-carboxy THC" is actually a shorthand nomenclature for "11-nor-delta-9-THC-9-carboxylic acid," which is sought by urine-testing de-

vices simply because it's the only pot particulate which shows up in urine at all in measurable quantities. Delta-9 THC itself—pot's only psychoactive component—is mainly excreted in feces, so urine tests can't catch it. Nine-carboxy THC shows up abundantly enough in urine, though; and moreover, it has the special property of being retained for so long in the body's digestive fatty acids that it's been detected for more than a month in persons undergoing certified, detox-ward abstinence from all drugs.²

Still and all, 9-carboxy THC is the only end-product pot metabolite that shows up in human urine in measurable quantities, so it's the compound all these tests look for. And since the EMIT and Abusescreen immunoassay tests can't reliably determine if it's in any given urine sample, all the putative "positives" these screening tests come up with have to be rechecked by better procedures in regional armed-services laboratories. The navy has five such labs, in San Diego and Oakland, and at Portsmouth, Virginia, and Jacksonville, Florida, and Great Lakes, Illinois. The army's piss specs from all domestic installations are retested at Fort Meade in Maryland, and the air force's retest lab is at Brooks Air Force Base in Texas. The Marine Corps appears to have all its piss specs retested by a private Maryland corporation called Mead CompuChem in North Carolina, but it's been impossible, so far, for *HIGH TIMES* to determine exactly what the Marine Corps' piss-test procedures are.

HIGH TIMES has, however, solidly determined that the army, navy and air force all run their retesting procedures using a process called "Manders-Whiting flame ionization." This process was first described in the January 1982 issue of the *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* by army colonel William Manders and Dr. John Whiting, and ever since then it's been used in all the armed services' retesting labs. While none of the services at this time will publicly reveal exactly how many urine specimens have been subjected to the Manders-Whiting flame-ionization procedure, it's estimated that the number is well up in the hundreds of thousands. And it's a very good bet indeed that every one of those results—both positive and negative—will have to be "overturned" in the very near future. The Manders-Whiting procedure, it appears, is simply inadequate to be entered in court proceedings—even military court proceedings—as "evidence" of prior exposure to marijuana smoke.

Mind you, the Manders-Whiting procedure is the inexpensive one. A real forensic-quality retesting procedure would involve an entire mass-spectrometry readout process—which is extremely expensive—after a long, painstaking gas-chromatographic breakdown of the urine sample. A full "GC-

²"Persistence of urinary marijuana levels after supervised abstinence," Daclais, C. and Pottash, A., *American Journal of Psychiatry*, vol. 139, no. 9, pp. 1196-1198, September 1982

mass spec" assay would cost at least \$100 in lab time alone, meaning that every 100,000 piss-test samples would cost the taxpayers \$10 million. So it would appear that the services opted for this flame-ionization process as a cost-cutting gesture. Remember, as you read further, that it is the cheaper procedure.

"IMPORTANT," blares the navy's official operating manual, in laying out the Manders-Whiting procedure: "PREPARE THIS REAGENT FRESH DAILY." So every morning, in all those service labs, the techs have to whip up painstakingly measured quantities of dimethyl sulfoxide with methanolic tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide, for that day's "alkylation reagent." A dash of this goes into each urine sample, along with some spectograde methanol, idomethane, hydrochloric acid and potassium phosphate for buffer. These chemicals all cost money, and so does the time it takes for the techs to fiddle with them.

Next, the urine sample, complete with reagents, is centrifuged thoroughly and dried under a stream of frosty nitrogen gas, before being fed into the gas-chromatography column for separation into its elements. This GC device is outfitted with a full computer unit, which pretty much takes over from the human operator at this point, in a distinctly sadomasochistic fashion.

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Then follows the "SIMCON Dialogue," a script of 42 separate questions raised by the computer and answered by the lab tech, dutifully punching his or her responses into the gimmick's alphanumeric keyboard: "SUPPRESS FORM FEED?" "O-CONTINUE." This has to burn up a lot of expensive lab time right along with all those chemicals, which are burnt up in an ionization flame as they come out of the chromatography column, one after the other. This SIMCON doxology has undoubtedly furnished numberless armed-services lab techs with a professional's competence in computer programming, at least—those who didn't blow themselves up mixing the hydrochloric acid with the methanol, anyhow. It has also wasted whole hundredweights of tax dollars, and will waste whole haystacks more over years to come.³

All these urine specimens have to be instantly deep-frozen on receipt, and kept frozen continuously ever after, until the final disposition of each individual case. Thousands of those specs have been deep-frozen for going on two years now, and will have to stay in the 'fridge for years yet, while the litigation proceeding from this snafu remorse-

(continued on next page)

³"MEDCOM-31C: LT'bt," Navy Urinalysis Screening Laboratory Standard Operating Procedure Manual, Department of the Navy, 1 February 1983

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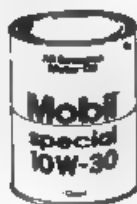
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'QUAT HEARING

/ continued from page 22

were versed on that, but they probably didn't want to raise it directly, because representatives of the Colombian embassy were in the audience."

That was the core of it, then. Chairman Hughes had promised the antiparaquat forces, even before the hearing began, that there would be more hearings, some other time, in which they would be allowed to speak. This hearing, it now seems clear, had to be controlled so that the Colombians would get the "right" message.

But even that didn't work out as planned, and the Colombians must have walked away with very mixed messages indeed. And the question of whether to paraquat U.S. pot fields will continue to be debated, not because it has any practical application here at all, but because politicians in this country want to use it as a ploy in international diplomacy.

MILITARY PEE

/ continued from previous page
lessly continues.

The taxpayer picks up the tab for all those piss 'fridges. And we also pay for the proper care and preservation of the *main* testing reagent here, the 9-carboxy THC from Research Triangle Park. It has to be kept in a *separate* deep-freeze from the urine samples, chilled down to minus-15 degrees Celsius, 365 days a year. And at a conservative estimate, Research Triangle has to be billing us \$500 for every 100 *micrograms* of that synthetic 9-carboxy THC, just to start with.

And remember now, this is the cheap, cut-rate, fast-food, bargain-basement procedure for "confirming" urinalysis screens. This is the one they run after they've *already* performed a whole enzyme-immune or radio-immune assay, frozen the piss spec and shipped or trucked or flown it, hundreds or thousands of miles by refrigerated freight, to a confirmation lab. Remember that this flame-ionization business is the process that *doesn't* work, precisely because it's so almighty cheap, and which will have to be replaced soon with a more *expensive* procedure!

All because of marijuana, too. Do not lose sight of that. This is all being done, and all this money is being spent, just to try to discourage our boys and girls in uniform from smoking pot. Weed. Wog hemp. *Marijuana*. Maryjane. Doobies. Muggles. Gage...

The Human Cost

The problem with the Manders-Whiting "confirmation" procedure, briefly, is that it's not a full mass-spectrometry process. Mass spec can determine the identity of 9-carboxy

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At the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Col. William Manders insists that he and Dr. Whiting never promulgated their flame procedure as a substitute for full mass-spectrometry, only as a supplement to the commercial screening tests. "It's a different sort of test," he clarifies. "When you run different sorts of tests in this way, you get much closer to determining the substance's identity. But of course you never reach the absolute." Colonel Manders predicts, "You're going to see a big move in the service laboratories toward full gas-liquid/mass spectrometry. But the people in the labs have to know what the heck they're doing."

At this point it's impossible to determine exactly what the armed services' lab personnel *imagined* they were doing the last two years, besides spending a phenomenal amount of money, both directly and indirectly. The biggest *indirect* cost of the two-year piss program, estimates Mark Waple, is the staggering amount of training money that is squandered every time a specialist in the services is demoted because of drug-abuse allegations. "These people all took basic training, of course, which costs thousands. Then they all had advanced individual training, and then years of specialized training to establish their Military Occupational Specialty. Every time they bust an Enlisted-6 rank down to an E-1, that's hundreds of thousands of dollars in training that's lost to the services, and permanently, because they're also not allowed to reenlist after their hitch runs out. Flight technicians, for instance. Aircraft maintenance personnel, trained navigators, fire-control specialists. That's hundreds of thousands of dollars of training wasted each time, and then they have to train people to *replace* them, so there's hundreds of thousands more."

And now all those expensive demotions are likely to be overturned, so that all those people will be eligible for reinstatement to the specialist positions which have been so expensively filled by their replacements. And all those people might well sue the government for tidy settlements, meaning the government will have to pay to defend itself against them, and pay again when it ultimately settles with them.

If the Defense Department starts stinging us all for yet more money for full GC/MS "confirmations" of future piss tests, maybe we just ought to go shopping for a new armed-services establishment.



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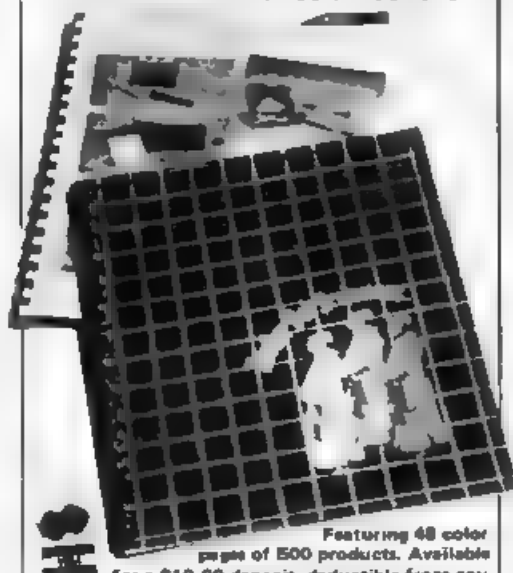
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HOMEGROWN BLASTS MARKET

TRANS-HIGH MARKET ANALYSIS

by Bud Bogart

A common plaint of potheads is that pot never gets better, and never, *ever* gets cheaper. Like old men talking about the blizzard of aught-six, most veteran potheads love nothing better than to harken back to the wonder weeds of yesteryear—the golden bales from Colombia, the glistening Buddha buds from Thailand, the Paki hash that wafted a fragrant mist when opened—and all for a fraction of what they cost now.

Of course, the reality of the times was much different. For every sun-colored Colombian there were a hundred dog-eared Mexicans, for every gram of Paki hash a ton of Leb dried to the consistency of granite. And costs have not risen as much as might be expected. The 45-dollar ounce dominated the pot market for a decade, and sometimes reappears when times allow.

But now the sinsemilla trade has thrown the entire pot market into a shambles: For the first time in recent memory, prices have tumbled on some high-line reefer, while others have skyrocketed and still other products have disappeared as if they had flown through the Bermuda Triangle. Reason? The long forecast "grassroots" grower increase.

For the last 10 years, since the earliest sinse growers first broke the news to the world, consumers have wishfully predicted that the swelling number of growers would cause the pound price of \$2 thou and up to deflate, but demand has out-paced production every year until now.

This year prices actually dropped, with pounds running from \$1,200 to \$1,400 on large lots, \$1,600 to \$2,000 on singles. A lot of early heavy investors got burned, especially those who bought some of the flashy bunk making the rounds. Among the dud bud that scorched the unwary was a seductive Kentucky that, although picture-perfect, just didn't work. One of the first sinse to hit the market this season, the Kentucky got snatched up at \$2,000-plus an elbow. There were long faces and short wallets when two weeks later a scruffier sinse, also from Kentucky, popped up in quantity, at around \$1,700 a pound, with twice the clout.

This was a pattern repeated frequently as the season heated up. By Thanksgiving, generally considered the absolute peak of the market season, with all the California lates coming in, prices had stabilized in the

high teens on most excellent-grade sinse. Gourmet grades were in the low twos, down a thousand dollars from last year.

Other areas of the pot market have gone through convulsions as well. Colombian suffered its most severe drought since the market got underway in '72. For weeks in October and early November there was no Colombian to be had at any price; even Miami was dry. Some long-warehoused losers finally reached the marketplace and even these dogs found homes.

Thai weed traveled an even rockier road. After becoming the glamour weed of the summer, with bale prices as low as \$1,200 a pound, it totally disappeared. Prices climbed during its last week of availability, with the same \$1,200 weed shaking down \$2,000 in a matter of days. What seemed like an inexhaustible harvest dwindled so quickly that veteran dealers found themselves without supply, and Thai was dropped from several four-star menus.

What all this activity portends for the future is anybody's guess. The smart money is buying short these days, and credit is often hard to get. Prices are so high on all but domestic exotics that anybody purchasing big numbers could get doused if a sudden torrent of flowers hits the market.

Cocaine capers . . . There was some talk a year or two ago, by the Establishment Media, that cocaine had lost its snooty appeal, that it was on the way out.

Forget it. The price wars in Miami—and Miami price wars rival Middle East rumbles for violence and intensity—have finally delivered some relief to consumers. Coke prices have tumbled at all but the gram levels. Ounces of extraordinarily pearly Peruvian toot with barely a tad of cut are fetching a mere \$1,900. And while gram prices have remained stable, around \$100 to \$110, quality has improved vastly. As a consequence, a lot of people who passed up toot for a while have dipped their noses back in the trough, taking advantage of the good deals.

Happily, these developments came just before the winter holiday season, assuring dealers of a brisk trade. According to one coke retailer, it was "the best year for coke sales since Jimmy Carter's first couple years in office."

TRANS-HIGH QUOTATIONS MARKET

CANADA

Commercial	arf-arf	oz	80-100
Colombian	likewise	lb	750-850
Gold and red		oz	.25
Colombian		lb	1,000-200
Hawaiian buds	almost non-existent	oz	325-350
		lb	2800-3600
Mexican tops	passable, usually available	oz	75-85
	impatient	lb	500-700
Homemade "cake" hash		gm	15
Afghan hash	flatblack	oz	260
		gm	15
Kashmir hash	reddish, rocket fuel	oz	3250
	excellent when available	lb	25
U.S. sinsemilla		oz	375
		oz	200
LSD	blots from California	one	4-10
		.00	200-450
Methaqualone	same boots as in States	one	3-6
		100	275-450
Cocaine	steadily rising quality	gm	130-180
		oz	2000-3200

COLOMBIA

Santa Marta	pawn in army	oz	15-20
golda, reda	rebel rumble	lb	75-110
Commercial	distribution	oz	5-10
domestic	difficult	lb	50-100
Colombian hash	forgettable	oz	8-25
		lb	100-225
Hash oil	a lost cause	oz	150-200
		lb	1500-2000
Mushrooms	not worth the effort	oz	40-75
Cocaine	devalued pesos make this a buy	oz	175-225
		lb	2500-3500

DENMARK

Imported weed	headster's status symbol	oz	75-125
		kilo	1250-3750
Homegrown pot	subtle, typically European	oz	free to \$10
Moroccan hash	quality better this year than last	oz	50-100
	transport	kilo	1000-2000
Lebanese hash	problems solved	oz	60-120
	top banana	kilo	1200-2200
Black Afghani hash		oz	100-135
Pakistani hash	ditto	oz	100-150
Cocaine	brisk market	gm	100-150
		oz	2500
		kilo	50,000

ECUADOR

Commercial	fresh as a flower	oz	7-10
Colombian		lb	60-100
Red and gold	surprisingly, not that much	oz	15-25
Colombian	passable	lb	200
Sierra buds		oz	6-10
		lb	70-100
Emeralds	the worst	oz	2-4
awamp grass		lb	40-60
Cocaine base	lots	gm	negotiable
Cocaine	pure as the driven snow	gm	25-40
LSD	traded for blow	one	5

JAMAICA

Jamaican gold	color, sweetness varies	lb	375-450
Sinsemilla	super tops	lb	750-1500

MEXICO

Guerrero gold	needles in a hay	oz	35
	stack	lb	200
Oaxacan	long-stem beauties	oz	10
		lb	90
Sinse	northern grown, sativa	oz	25
	on the stalk	lb	250
Acapulco gold		oz	20
		lb	175
Hash	greenish brown, a snoozer	oz	.5
	much fake	lb	150
Cocaine	pass it on	gm	30-50
Methaqualone	much pharma cutical, okay	ea	1-2

NORTHERN IRELAND

Hash, Red Leb	fresh as a daisy	oz	150
Hash, Blond Leb	in white bags	oz	135
Hash, Paki black	champion	oz	175
Pot, African sticks	okay, not super	oz	170
Pot, Colombian	low-quality mesh	oz	110
Pot, homegrown	mostly baloney	oz	0-60
Speed	crystal meth	gm	30
LSD	European blots	ea	6
Cocaine	called "De Loreau White"	gm	160

PANAMA

Seeded redhair	seedy but primo	oz	150
		lb	1650-1750
Red sinsemilla	still seedy but stung & stony	oz	160
		lb	1800
Panama red	rarely red, usually green-brown	oz	50-65
		lb	580

SAUDI ARABIA

Black Kashmir hash	one of the world's great hashes	gm	20
		oz	250
Nepalese hash	fingers only	gm	15-20
		oz	225-250
Pakistan hash	fresh, pressed	gm	.75-200
		oz	10-15
Afghan hash	greenish black, funny	gm	175-200
	a choker	oz	.10
Lebanese red hash		gm	.75-200
Cocaine	no shit, the real thing, but \$ great	gm	250-300
Thai sticks		one	25
Philippine pot	commercial grade	oz	50-75
Ups & downs	legal, kind of	oz	5
Moonshine	homemade	pint	30

UNITED STATES

Area Bulletins			
Pensacola, Fla.	sunshine sense, not bad (50 lbs run,)	lb	800
Thurmond, Ind.	Leb hash, dry and feeble	oz	95
Penrose, Colo.	mountain-grown ruderaus sense	oz	175
Boston	commercial Colombian, rare but there	oz	65
Cambridge, Mass.	boot ludes, preppy cookies	ea	3
New Haven, Conn.	leftover Jamaican, tasty, but dry	oz	150
Duluth, Minn.	bogus Hawaiian, a bust	oz	170
Redding, Calif.	Afghan-bred local sense kick-ass	oz	180
Eugene, Oreg.	purple kush, stony as hell	oz	180

National Market

U.S. sinsemilla	late season, still providing	oz	135-250
	on the way	lb	1200-2600
Commercial		oz	60-80
Mexican		lb	650-950
Top grade	gold and green	oz	120-150
Mexican	senses	lb	1100-1650
Jamaican	negligible supply	oz	45-65
	out of season	lb	450-550
Jamaican sinsemilla		oz	175
Commercial	sudden severe drought	lb	1100-1500
Colombian	equally unavailable	oz	75
Primo		lb	700
Colombian		oz	85
Thai sticks	beware of Mexican poseurs	one	10-25
	seasonal shortage	oz	180-225
Loose Thai		lb	175-225
		oz	1550-2000
Hawaiian	lots of mediocrity	oz	235-300
		lb	2700-3200
Lebanese hash	here, but in lesser volume	oz	110-140
		lb	900-1100
Black Afghani hash	fresh, gummy slabs	oz	.40-.90
		lb	1850-2000
Paki hash	bits and pieces	oz	165
		lb	1600-1900
Pailocycin mushrooms	dried, lots of pieces	oz	175
Peyote	hard to find	lb	1600
LSD	many varieties	one	10
		oz	3-5
Cocaine	prices dipping, big supply	gm	150-300
		oz	100-200
		lb	350-400
Methaqualone	South American pharmaceuticals biker's best	oz	2000-2850
		ea	10-20
Methamphetamine		100	300-500
		gm	75-110

Alaska

Commercial	shake city	oz	50-65
Colombian		lb	550-650
Domestic	"us the season	oz	50
sinsemilla		lb	280
Mexican weed	most available	oz	50-65
		lb	500-600
Mainland	strungrunt	oz	225-300
sinsemilla	flow	lb	2000-2750
Thai sticks	tumberland	one	20
		lb	2400-2650
Lebanese hash	big mover	gm	.10
		oz	130-200
Cocaine	are you shifting me?	gm	.100-175
	blots	oz	2000-2800
LSD		one	5
		100	350-500
Methaqualone	bootlockers	one	5
		100	350

Hawaii

Puna buds	uncharacteristic scarcity	oz	225-275
	western slope	lb	2200-2750
Kona gold	beauties	oz	225-275
		lb	2000-2500
Waikiki wacky	sparkles with resin	oz	250-275
		lb	2500-2700
Maui wowie	overpriced, overrated	oz	225-275
	fresh from the lab	lb	2400-3000
LSD	hot from the	one	2-4
Mushrooms	java beds, dried	oz	150
Cocaine	not a big mover	gm	75-125
		oz	2050-3000
Amphetamines	over the counter from S.A.	one	2

CHARGES

Cocaine incites people, especially minorities, to commit rape, pillage and other unpleasant and destructive acts. Overdoses, even from snorting, can be fatal. Chronic use can cause a deficiency of serotonin, leading to depression, and can produce acute anxiety and psychosis with paranoia, auditory and visual hallucinations. Cocaine can also cause addiction and knock people's noses off.

NATURE AND USE

Cocaine is an alkaloid refined from the leaves of several coca-shrub species that grow in the highlands of Peru, Bolivia, Colombia and in the Amazon basin. Indians in these regions have chewed the leaves for hundreds of years to facilitate performance and as a dietary supplement. In making cocaine, the leaves are placed in gasoline drums filled with kerosene. The macerated leaves are then subjected to sulfuric acid to release the cocaine "pasta" which is refined through further solvent extraction into cocaine hydrochloride. The bulk of pasta is the same or a little less than cocaine HCL, so it is increasingly being shipped in pasta form.

In 1860 Albert Niemann of Göttingen, Germany, first isolated cocaine from the leaf and noted its numbing effect on the tongue.¹ For the rest of the century a number of famous doctors, including Sigmund Freud, experimented with cocaine and its use in "tonics" and patent medicines. Coca-Cola, which was first sold as such a tonic, still uses coca leaves—with the cocaine removed—for flavoring. By 1899, cocaine abuse was being publicized, and prohibitionists launched a campaign of fear of "cocaine-crazed black dope fiends" to gain their ends.² In 1914 cocaine was included as a narcotic in the Harrison Act, and its recreational use went underground.

Cocaine usually appears as white crystalline flakes or powder that glitters. It can be injected or further refined into freebase and smoked,³ but the most common use is by nasal

COCAINE

AKA: coke, snow, blow, gold dust, Bernice, lady, she, dama blanca, flake, pasta, freebase, etc.

Medical advice by David E. Smith, M.D. Written by David E. Smith and Rick Seymour of the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic. The authors do not advocate the use of any psychoactive substances.

insufflation, or snorting. The effects include localized numbing of the nose, gums and throat, feelings of euphoria and calm alertness, along with an overblown sense of one's physical and mental abilities. A potent central-nervous-system stimulant, cocaine affects the brain-chemical neurotransmitters norepinephrine and dopamine. As a result, heart rate increases, pupils dilate; blood sugar increases; blood vessels constrict, increasing the flow to the brain and muscles, sphincters tighten; digestion slows and body temperature rises.

At low doses, cocaine enhances sexual desire and tactile awareness; at high doses, however, it impairs sexual performance. It is often used in combination with other drugs such as alcohol or Quaaludes, in an upper-downer cycle. Injected with heroin, the mixture is called a "speedball." Cocaine may be cut with a variety of substances. Recent reports to the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic indicate that, at least on the West Coast, the price of cocaine is dropping and the purity is increasing.⁴ Paradoxically, the drug's appeal to younger users seems on the wane.

Medical use of cocaine is currently limited to topical anesthesia and, in a modified Brompton's Solution (containing methadone, cocaine and alcohol), for treatment of pain from terminal cancer.⁴ Grinspoon and Bakalar have suggested its use in treatment and diagnosis of certain mental disorders.⁵

ADVERSE EFFECTS

Because cocaine does constrict

the mucous membrane blood vessels in the nose, prolonged use can cause irritation and eventually necrosis (tissue death). However, this effect has been disproportionately stressed in street mythology. Although more common in the injection and smoking of cocaine, there has been a substantial increase in fatal overdoses from snorting as well. The mechanism of death in most of these overdose reactions is either cocaine-induced convulsions or toxic heart reactions.⁶ Rupture of containers for smuggling cocaine in the gastrointestinal system have also resulted in death from massive overdose.

Psychological results from prolonged use can range from acute anxiety to cocaine psychosis with paranoia and auditory and visual hallucinations. High doses can reduce sexual activity and impair ejaculatory and erectile ability. Cocaine abuse can develop into addiction characterized by compulsive loss of control over consumption and continued use in spite of adverse consequences. Development of an upper-downer pattern can lead to the abuse of alcohol, other depressants and opiates.

FIRST-AID PLUS

Acute anxiety reactions can be managed with reassurance, a supportive environment and oral sedative-hypnotic medication, such as diazepam. Overdoses should be managed by physicians experienced in the administration of such medications. Cocaine-induced seizures can be treated by chlordi-

azepoxide hydrochloride (Librium) or diazepam (Valium). Cocaine psychosis can be handled with antipsychotic medicine and haloperidol in a structured, treatment setting. If this fails to work, hospitalization in a psychiatric unit is indicated.

Withdrawal from cocaine dependence is characterized by depression, anxiety and lethargy which begins to resolve in about a week. Medication is rarely needed. Recovery from dependence involves constructive alternatives to "drug hunger," a major factor in recurring addiction, education on the nature of addictive diseases and the enlistment of active allies, usually through family therapy. Group therapy, such as that offered by Cocaine Anonymous or Cocaine Recovery Support Group, is vital. Such groups as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous can be helpful if they will accept cocaine abusers. Exercise that produces cardiopulmonary stimulation for more than 20 minutes produces an increase in the release of endogenous endorphins, reducing both drug hunger and anxiety.⁷

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JOHN KEEL, PART I

He's exposed fakirs in India and charmed cobras in Times Square. He's chased UFOs, Bigfoot and the dreaded "men in black"—and lived to tell the tales! by Jim Cusimano and Larry Sloman

John Keel has spent much of his life being the world's foremost authority. Mention his name back in the 1950s and the response would be, "Oh, isn't he that guy who knows everything about black magic and the occult?" By the '70s Keel's name had become synonymous with UFOs, as his fascinating ideas revolutionized the way we looked at those mysterious things in the sky.

But Keel was no armchair theorist. He spent years circumnavigating the globe, peeking into the most arcane corners of the Third World, researching their ancient magical beliefs and rites. Along the way he became world famous for his exposé of the Indian rope trick and adept at the fine art of cobra-charming.

When he returned to the States in the mid-'50s Keel lectured extensively, then settled back in his adopted hometown, New York City, where he served as head writer for Goodson and Todman, the TV impresarios, working on their hits "To Tell the Truth," "I've Got a Secret" and the "Price Is Right." After writing all of Merv Griffin's early ad-libs, he packed up and moved to Hollywood, where he spent a year "hating every minute of it."

Keel returned to New York in 1965, just in time for the big blackout. Intrigued by a UFO flap near his birthplace in upstate New York, he began researching an article for Playboy. Ten years and five books later, his obsession with UFOs was satiated with the publication of *The Eighth Tower*, a summing up of his crank cosmology.

Put simply, after thousands of hours of field research and hundreds of interviews with UFO contactees, Keel concluded that the UFO phenomenon could not be extraterrestrial in nature. Rather, he theorized that UFOs were part of the chimerical activity that has plagued this planet since its inception—a modern, updated version of fairies, monsters,

Bigfoot and other strange entities that go bump in the night.

Besides his 12 books (the most famous of which are *UFO—Operation Trojan Horse*, *The Mothman Prophecies*, *Our Haunted Planet* and *Strange Creatures from Time and Space*), Keel has also managed to find time to write over 200 slapstick comedy movies under contract to the Trans-Lux Corporation. He is currently working on three books, one of which will "solve all the mysteries of the Universe."

HIGH TIMES: When did you begin your career?

JOHN KEEL: I was about twelve years old. I sold an article to a magicians' magazine when I was about twelve or thirteen years old. They sent me a check for two dollars.

And then I started writing for things like *Mechanics Illustrated*. But, when I was sixteen, I sold to the *New Yorker*, and then I thought I was really really a hotshot, because the *New Yorker* was considered the toughest of all markets. **HIGH TIMES:** You were doing this from your family's upstate New York farm?

KEEL: Yeah. And it was my way of getting away from the farm. I was going to write my way out.

HIGH TIMES: What did your family think of it?

KEEL: They hated the whole idea. They wanted me to be a farmer, like them.

HIGH TIMES: So when did you finally leave the farm?

KEEL: When I was seventeen. I came to New York with seventy-five cents. It was four hundred miles. I hitchhiked to New York. It took two days. I slept on park benches and all that. In those days it was much different. The Village was much different than it is now. It was very easy to meet people;

within a very short time I knew everybody in the Village. I was the editor of a poetry magazine down there. Then I started a newspaper called *Limelight*, a weekly tabloid about Village artists and writers.

HIGH TIMES: Had you written for the pulp magazines?

KEEL: I had written a lot of stuff for the pulps. I used to write by the pound. I'd write detective stories and science-fiction stories. I sold a lot of science fiction in those days, all when I was eighteen, twenty years old. The comic books then were booming—what happened to the comic books was that an idiot psychiatrist, Dr. Frederick Wertham, came out with an article in an obscure magazine, saying comic books were bad for children, that Batman and Robin were homosexuals... All this bullshit! And he ruined the comic-book business. Overnight this article got an enormous amount of publicity, and overnight they had to change all the comic books, and so, they... for years afterwards, you couldn't buy anything except *Donald Duck* and *Archie*.

At that time, television was coming in. I worked in television. WABD, down at Wanamaker's Store, down on Astor Place. And everybody worked for nothing in television. The cameramen, the directors, everybody was working for nothing, just to get started in it. And I was writing all kinds of stupid shows. They had really dumb shows in those days because they had no money. Their biggest expense, their big deal for production, would be to release balloons, and we were going crazy trying to think of ways to use balloons because they were cheap.

HIGH TIMES: Then you got drafted?

KEEL: I got drafted in '51, the Korean War broke out.

HIGH TIMES: Where were you sent?

UFOs and two-headed snakes. Throughout his career Keel has always been an astute chronicler of the bizarre.

KEEL: They sent me to Europe, but first they sent me to Indiantowngap, Pennsylvania, because every day they would tell us that the hills there were just like the hills in Korea. And they had us running up and down these hills playing soldier. The army was a charming thing in those days. All of our officers, most of them, were Southerners, and most of the guys that I was drafted with were from the North and most of them were black, and after we finished basic training they sent all the black guys to Korea and all the white guys to Europe. And this was an army policy, and the Korean War was fought largely by black guys—talk about racial prejudice carried to an extreme.

HIGH TIMES: What did you do in the army? Didn't you get into Intelligence or something? Propaganda?

KEEL: Well, they told us how terrible it was going to be in Europe, that we would live in tents and that we would travel in these cattle cars to our destinations, and so on. So they shipped me to Frankfurt. I had no idea where I was going. They just had numbers on my orders. I didn't know. We got off the train, and all these other G.I.'s that were with us... I was with another guy, a friend of mine who went through basic with me, and all of the other G.I.'s were being loaded into trucks and we were looking around. Where's our truck? A limousine pulled up and this German driver gets out and he's dressed like a Nazi storm trooper, and he calls out our names, and we get into the limousine and all these other people are getting into trucks, and he started driving through the night in Frankfurt, Germany, and we asked him, "Are we going to live in a tent?" And he said, "No, you'll live in a castle," and he drove us to this castle outside of Frankfurt, and that was a radio station, the American Forces Network, and we lived in a castle.

HIGH TIMES: You were working for the Armed Forces Radio?

KEEL: Yeah. It turned out it was the biggest radio network in the world. They had stations all over Europe, and within a year's time I was the chief of continuity and production. I was the head of the whole production setup for the whole network. It took me about a year to work my way up to that position, mainly because nobody else knew anything about anything, and I was the only one that had any experience, and, you know, from

"You really
can't charm
a cobra.
He's just
biding his time,
waiting to strike
at you."

writing *Superman*...

And then I wrote my own way. I dreamed up assignments for myself and sent myself all over Europe. I produced the soldiers' singing contest all over Europe. I went all over France and all over Holland and so on, finding singers in the army to record them for the radio program, and when there were disasters, like in the Po Valley in Italy, I would fly down and cover the disaster.

Then on Halloween in 1952 I dreamed up a radio show from inside Frankenstein's castle. There really is a Frankenstein castle there, and it was a huge success. It scared the hell out of everybody, and the British newspapers wrote it up, *Time* magazine wrote it up, and they were comparing me to Orson Welles, and so the next year, in '53, I had to top myself when Halloween rolled around. I suggested to the colonel who was in charge of the network that he send me to Egypt and I'd do a broadcast from the Great Pyramid, and he said, "Sure," and they sent me and a whole team down to Egypt and we did a broadcast from inside the pyramid. I spent about eight or ten hours inside the Great Pyramid.

HIGH TIMES: What happened when you came back?

KEEL: I took my discharge in Europe. I decided that I would like to go and live in Egypt for a while. And then from there I worked my way around the world.

HIGH TIMES: When did you start writing magazine articles?

KEEL: Well, while I was still with the army

I have six scrapbooks at home filled

with clippings from *Stars & Stripes*.

They would write me up every week because I was the only one that was doing anything. They would carry all of these John Keel stories, and pictures of me—I was a celebrity there. And I remember going into a nightclub in Berlin and they turned the spotlight on my table. Had me stand up.

HIGH TIMES: When did you write *Jadoo*? How did that come about?

KEEL: Well, first I did all of the traveling in India and so on. And then when I got to Singapore the British threw me out of Singapore. I ended up broke in Singapore. They called me an adventurer and threw me out. They made me take the first ship out which was going all of the way back to Europe. A Swedish boat—forty days to get back to Europe.

HIGH TIMES: You describe some incredible adventures in *Jadoo*. The time you woke up in a brothel in Iraq and saw a prostitute disemboweled by her brother?

KEEL: Yeah, well, I guess they still do it. If a woman becomes a prostitute she disgraces her whole family. And if the family catches up with her they'll kill her. The brothers will kill her. I saw that happen to one girl.

HIGH TIMES: There are some great things in that book. Your meeting with Ali Baba.

KEEL: He was later killed by the Iraqi army. He was a bandit who lived in the desert. He made the mistake of killing a jeep full of tourists. If he had killed a jeep full of Arabs they wouldn't have cared. But, my God. He was interfering with the tourist business. And it was a group of American tourists. That made it even worse. And so, about a year after I had spent some time with him the Iraqi army tracked him down and they killed him and his entire band.

HIGH TIMES: Was it in Iraq that you visited that community of devil worshippers?

KEEL: Yeah, the Izedi tribe in Iraq. I think they have been wiped out too. It was a tribe of primitive people in northern Iraq who believed that God was good so you didn't have to worry about him. But, the Devil was bad and you had better appease him at any cost. And so they sort of worshiped the Devil. "Don't bother us, Devil, because we think you're the greatest." And I spent some time with them. They had little ceremonies that were kind of weird. But it wasn't anything

like you'd see with the people practicing black magic in other parts of the world. It was just sort of a harmless form of religion.

HIGH TIMES: Weren't you buried alive in India?

KEEL: For just a few minutes. That was a very unhappy experience. They didn't use a coffin or anything. You would lie on the ground and they would put a board on top of you and cover you with dirt. Very porous dirt there. And some of these fakirs can be buried for days at a time. Because you can breath through the soil, especially if there is a shallow grave. But the claustrophobic feeling is awesome.

And I did all these things so that I could be photographed doing them. And then when I got the pictures I could sell articles from them. I have photographs of all of this stuff. I photographed people eating snakes alive, and doing all kinds of weird things. There were groups of people in India that used to walk down the street beating themselves with whips. Strange things.

HIGH TIMES: How old were you then?

KEEL: I was twenty-four or twenty-five years old.

HIGH TIMES: And you were just making a buck? Would it be wrong if we said you were a hustler?

KEEL: No. I wasn't. . . If I had hustled I would have made more money than I did. Because I was broke most of the time. Most of the time I was waiting for checks from my agent. What I thought I was doing then was building a career. And because things were so fragile—one should become famous for doing something like that. You've got to keep on doing it. If you are going to climb the tallest building in Chicago, then you've got to climb the tallest building in Los Angeles and the tallest building in New York and it doesn't matter if you can do card tricks too. They don't want to see the card tricks. They want to see you climb buildings. And so, with me, I was constantly searching for. . .

HIGH TIMES: . . . new buildings to climb.

Looking back, do you think you were then more of an adventurous person?

KEEL: I was at that time. I was willing to take chances that I wouldn't take today. I did things and went places that I wouldn't think of doing now. And you know, I was never in very

"I saw amazing things—one man who could gradually pull his eyeballs all the way out."

robust health. So I did a lot of things in spite of my physical condition. I climbed mountains, mostly because they were in the way. I was trying to get over them. I did a lot of things just because it was necessary at that time to do them. I suppose I had the soul of a hustler. But I didn't have the kind of response that a hustler would get. I was not hustling per se. I was trying to go from point A to point B. And if there was a village of snake charmers in between, then I was spending time with the snake charmers.

HIGH TIMES: Didn't you become a celebrity in the places you were?

KEEL: Yes. In India the newspapers gave me enormous coverage

For some reason they loved Robert Ripley of *Believe It or Not* in India. He must have been a big tipper. And the newspapers decided that I was another Robert Ripley. They followed me around and they were always calling me the "new Robert Ripley." Well, that helped me enormously.

HIGH TIMES: Tell us about the Indian rope trick. That was a big stunt you exposed in *Jadoo*.

KEEL: Basically, you know, the trick is that the rope climbs into the air and the boy climbs up the rope and the magician tells the boy to come down and the boy says, "No." And the magician climbs up the rope and then pieces of the boy start falling down to the ground. Then the magician climbs down the rope, he gathers up these pieces and puts them in a basket and the boy jumps out whole. And that's the Indian rope trick. In a nutshell. There are about ten different ways of doing it.

HIGH TIMES: Yeah, but then you attempted to do it?

KEEL: Well, then I attempted to do it and I attempted to do it on a very small scale. I invited all of the newspaper men in New Delhi to come and see this thing. And everything went crazy. The string broke. . . So the newspapers gave me enormous publicity, and I would say that most of them were very kind about it. And I have all of those clippings still somewhere in my boxes at home.

HIGH TIMES: It was a fiasco!

KEEL: It was a total fiasco.

HIGH TIMES: The rope went up about three feet. How was the trick usually done?

KEEL: Well, it's a secret. Read *Jadoo*.

HIGH TIMES: It's out of print, John.

KEEL: Well, you have to go to a rare-book dealer and cough up forty or fifty dollars and he'll find you a copy of the book.

HIGH TIMES: So, in essence, a lot of these things that you were doing was going around debunking this primitive magic.

KEEL: Yes. Mostly debunking.

HIGH TIMES: But, on the other hand, there were authentic miracles, like the tricks the Tibetan lamas did.

KEEL: Yeah. I saw a lot of weird things up there. There was a monastery in Tibet where the lamas were studying certain disciplines and they'd go naked through the snow. Bitter cold. And they seemed to have such control over their bodies. There was one discipline where they learned to run very very fast. . . hard to explain to an outsider. But, they become messengers. They can travel like the wind, practically. And they did levitation.

HIGH TIMES: You actually saw levitation?

KEEL: I saw a levitation. There was just a man sitting cross-legged in the air. And this is a lot more common than Westerners believe. And I suspected magic tricks at the time but there doesn't seem to be any way to do it. He had one hand on a stick, keeping his balance on the stick. But I think if he could do it mechanically it would be beyond the means of the Tibetans. I know that other people photographed it. I couldn't, because by then I was broke and I had to sell my camera.

Yeah, there are all kinds of amazing things. I saw one man who could gradually pull his eyeballs all the way out. They'd just hang down his face.

They will do these things just as a trick to beg. There was one man that could hang enormous weights from his genitals. This was the way he made his living. He had this thing rigged up and it was like a bag and he'd fill it with stones. And tie it to his genitals. And pick up this bag that weighed fifty or seventy-five pounds. And everyone said, "Wow." And they'd give him money.

HIGH TIMES: And you sold your cameras?!

KEEL: Well, yeah, then... you have a man standing on one leg for thirty years. And people will give him money for standing on one leg.

HIGH TIMES: What was the heaviest thing you saw in your travels?

KEEL: Well, the thing that will shake you the most—to see that millions of people are suffering. People living on the streets in Calcutta, dying on the streets of Calcutta. People living in the kind of poverty you can't imagine. I remember in one village almost crying over the state of these people and knowing that I could leave the village and I might be in New York or Chicago the next month. But these people were there all of their lives. I was in a village in the desert and they had a little muddy hole in the ground. It was their well, the village well, and the chief of the village said, "Did you ever see such water in your whole life? Have you ever seen so much water and such great water?" And I had to drink some of it and it was like drinking urine. For them this was the center of their whole life. That stupid well. These were the things that shook me up the most.

There were other things, like walking through the jungle in India, they call it the "bush." And I saw this huge thing that I thought was an anthill. You see these big anthills. And as I got right up to it and turned around—it was an elephant. The elephants move with total silence through the jungle. I don't know how they do it, but they don't snap any twigs or rustle the leaves. They just sort of glide through, and fortunately this was a peaceful elephant. But sometimes they can be rather nasty. The Indians call them the "elephant people." They are almost human. They are so intelligent.

You know, I have seen the ants on the march. You lie awake at night and it sounds like it's raining out. It isn't

"Being buried alive was a very unhappy experience. They didn't use a coffin or anything."

raining—it's the ants. Eating as they go along. Eating everything in their path. And they are huge vicious ants.

HIGH TIMES: How did *Jadoo* do?

KEEL: It did pretty well. The publisher was a very aggressive publisher. They promoted the hell out of it. There was a period in 1957-'58 you couldn't pick up a newspaper without seeing a picture of John Keel—charming cobras and doing all of this other stuff.

HIGH TIMES: Didn't they have you in a window?

KEEL: I was in a window—of a pet shop, near Times Square. Every day at three o'clock I'd get in the window and charm my cobras. I brought three cobras back from India. And two boa constrictors.

HIGH TIMES: Were they defanged?

KEEL: No. They die if you do that.

HIGH TIMES: They were cobras that were actually dangerous?

KEEL: The window was only about six-feet square, so there wasn't much room for me to move around in. And the snake, of course, was always trying to get at you. That's why... you really can't charm a cobra. He's just biding his time, waiting to strike at you.

HIGH TIMES: Well, how the hell do you—

KEEL: You have to learn how to do it.

HIGH TIMES: That's what I'm asking. How do you keep the guy from getting you?

KEEL: Well, you learn from his actions when he's about to strike. And he's not going to strike until you are within

range. He'll strike at a distance of about one-third of the length of his body. So, if he's six-feet long he can strike about two feet. And you have to be two and a half feet away, and when you're in a window that's only six-feet square... and huge crowds used to gather every day and watch this stupid kid get in the window. And I had the flute and all of the equipment and the snake was in the basket.

HIGH TIMES: It wasn't just bullshit?

KEEL: Yeah. You are moving your hands back and forth with the flute. And the snake is following the movement of your hands. If you stop moving the snake strikes. And, well, I had a whole act I worked out. So that the people outside that were watching were terrified, because a cobra is a very awesome thing when you see it alive in front of you.

After I would do this, I would go home and I'd fall apart. While I was doing it I was perfectly calm and I could do it. And I would get home and suddenly—*blah!* Crazy time.

HIGH TIMES: How did you get the snakes in the country?

KEEL: Packed them in a box marked COBRAS. At five o'clock one morning the airport phoned me and said, "We've got a box here that says it's full of snakes and we want you to come out here and get it." And I said, "Well, suppose it's full of diamonds." And he says, "It says they are poisonous snakes. And we believe it." And so I had to run out to the airport and pick this box up.

HIGH TIMES: Did you buy them in India?

KEEL: Yes.

HIGH TIMES: How much were they?

KEEL: They were cheap. Like three dollars apiece. This guy I knew used to go out and collect them and sell them to zoos. And he made very little money.

HIGH TIMES: Are they smart?

KEEL: No. They have no personalities. They live entirely by instinct. A snake is totally devoid of intelligence or personality.

HIGH TIMES: You started your research into flying saucers when you did a *Playboy* article about a UFO flap in your hometown in 1965. Before you went up to Buffalo to investigate during the flap, were you at all interested in flying saucers?

KEEL: Oh, sure, I'd been interested in

By 30, Keel had swashbuckled through Asia. Here he poses with the first Sherpa to scale Mount Everest.



it since I was a kid, because I had read Charles Fort then, and so I was one of the few people who attended the first flying-saucer convention in 1948. They had a convention on Fourteenth Street here in New York, and there were about thirty people there, and I remember it rather well. I can't remember who staged the damn thing, but I do remember that everybody was shouting at everybody else. It was a screaming match, but even in 1948 they'd all decided that the government was withholding information about the flying saucers and that something should be done about the air force.

So in 1952, when I was with AFM in Germany, I did a radio program about flying saucers and it was very well received and it got mail from all over about that, people in Europe testifying to what they had seen themselves. There were a lot of sightings in 1952 everywhere in the world, especially in Europe.

HIGH TIMES: How much of an influence did Fort have in shaping your ideas?

KEEL: Oh, I'm sure he had an enormous influence, because Charles Fort didn't just write a lot about flying saucers. He wrote about all sorts of unusual things. The biggest influence of my childhood would be the various books about Harry Houdini though... I was more interested in magic than I was in Fortian things. I wanted to be a stage magician. Of course, there was no way to make a living in magic anymore.

HIGH TIMES: So you wrote this article for *Playboy*.

KEEL: And I wrote a lot of other articles too. I did an article for *True* magazine on flying saucers, and after the issue came out I went up to the editorial offices and the editor showed me three or four big bags. He said, "This is the mail that's come in on your article, you want to take it home with you?" Eighteen thousand letters from one article, and today, of course, you get three letters from an article like that, but this was at the height of the UFO thing in 1967. We just read samplings of those letters, but most of those people have stories of their own, really unusual contacts or missing time. Really bizarre things. I'm sorry that I had no way of preserving those eighteen thousand letters.

HIGH TIMES: So you went to Buffalo. When you first started investigating and actually doing work in the field,

"In the '60s in West Virginia these objects were flying like an airline on a regular schedule."

on UFOs and contactees and everything, you went in there with the theory that they were extraterrestrial?

KEEL: Well, I went in there with a belief, not a theory. I accepted the extraterrestrial belief because everybody else accepted it.

HIGH TIMES: Which you've known about since like '48.

KEEL: The extraterrestrial explanation was a belief that sprang out when everybody reasoned that since the UFOs don't belong to the Russians or to the United States, they have to come from Mars or Venus or something like that.

HIGH TIMES: But they were seen as spacecraft, machines.

KEEL: They're always called spacecraft, even today. You pick up the UFO fan magazines and they're always talking about the craft, and what people are mostly seeing are lights, not objects. The solid objects are very rare, and when you really investigate those cases they fall apart.

I had a friend who saw objects and photographed them and what had turned out on the photographs was entirely different from what he saw, which often happens with the UFO thing. But he had seen these huge things rising up out of fields and so on, and a lot of other people saw the same things.

HIGH TIMES: What have you seen?

KEEL: I've seen a lot of the lights in the sky, a lot of them. I've seen—I've lost count—I've seen maybe fifty or seventy-five of these; they're very

special lights. If you see one, you know how different they are from any other light. But once you've seen these lights, you know that it can't be a star or any other thing that's in the sky. It's a special kind of light that there's no way to describe. People usually try to describe it as a diamondlike light, but it's a very special kind of thing. The strobe lights on airplanes don't come close.

When I first got into this, I used to drive out to the airport at night and sit there and watch the planes entering and leaving and I became familiar with every kind of light that the airplanes carry, just for that reason, so I would be able to recognize, but then when I was down in West Virginia, in those days, in the '60s, these objects were flying like an airline on a regular schedule, and they'd say, "Well, if you want to see a flying saucer, come out at eight o'clock on Wednesday night, they go over every week at that time." And you would go out at eight o'clock on Wednesday night and there would go one of these strange lights, and sometimes they seemed to be very low in the sky. One night we tried to chase them with a private airplane.

We couldn't chase them because they would just take off, zip, like that, and be gone, and we tried all sorts of ways of finding out something about them, but

HIGH TIMES: Did you ever see any other physical evidence, like burnt ground?

KEEL: Oh, yeah, we've had things like rings, but in earlier times they used to call them fairy rings. These are circles in the fields that sometimes are burnt, sometimes the grass is just knocked down, pressed down like something round has landed there. The weirdest thing was in Ohio—a lovely dog, a farm dog, had been crushed to death in the center of one of these circles, and the local veterinarian said that every bone in the dog's body had been crushed. It was like some very heavy thing had landed on this dog, this poor dog in the field, and that there was a circle of crushed grass around it.

HIGH TIMES: First animal mutilation.

KEEL: Well, there were a lot of animal mutilations in those days in Ohio and West Virginia, and I was checking those as sort of an extra added thing. They seemed to be related to the UFOs but I couldn't figure out how. There was one case where a cow in Ohio had been cut in half, like a big

pair of scissors had just cut it right in half, and I couldn't figure out—suppose you wanted to do that to a cow, how would you do it? I mean, you'd have to build a huge buzz saw or something and run it through the buzz saw, and the cut was absolutely clean and there was no blood oozing. There should have been a lot of blood from something like that, but there was no blood.

And about four years ago a man in Mexico turned up in the same unfortunate condition. Some people were driving on a highway in Mexico and something hit their car. They stopped the car and it was one half of a man's body, and then some distance away they found the other half and the body had been cut right in half and they don't know what happened to him. He was an elderly man. They don't know what happened to him and how it happened, but it's pretty scary that these things happen at all.

I also remember some people that I knew in West Virginia who had a little puppy, you know, a lovable little puppy like puppies are, and they let it out one night and as soon as it went out the door it let out a little yelp and they went outside and the dog was lying dead and there was a little cut in his body and the heart had been removed, and this is in like a matter of a minute or two minutes that they let him out, and I examined the body of this dog and I don't know how the hell they did it. Somebody or something made a cut, a little cut, and reached in and removed the heart, and all in the space of a few seconds. There's no animal that would do that. You try to blame owls or whatever. No way.

We don't know what happened to that poor little puppy. There are a lot of dog disappearances during UFOs. Many dogs disappear. Often the dog will go running out of the house yelling and barking at something in the field and the people will see something in the field, and the dog will never come back and it's a mystery what happens to these dogs. □

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JOE COLEMAN: GEEK CARTOONIST

When Joe Coleman is not onstage biting the heads off live mice or blowing himself up, he can be found at home losing himself in his comix.

The Setting: A sterile hang-out for the pathetically wimpy, Milquetoast art clan who are hardly worthy to lick the black-hair-clotted asshole of Abel Salazar.

The Event: *POLYSEXUALITY*, a *SEMIOTEXT(e)* excuse for the maggots to pout out their empty art platitudes while banana jerkin' their stumpy members.

But now, performers and audience alike were about to meet their judge, jury and executioner: Professor Momboozoo. He entered the stage dressed in ancient priest's robes, and a necklace of human bones, a wrathful messiah about to wreak out an apocalyptic justice. At this point there was an oozing in the audience of primordial fear.

Without any warning the professor smashed a bottle of wine on his head, then began growling and spitting insults at the confused crowd. He called upon the demons that have haunted him from the house on 99 Ward Street. His body twisted, writhed and catapulted around the stage and into the audience, his face contorted in a godless obscenity.

Suddenly, Professor Momboozoo rose again to his feet. Blood was now dripping from his forehead, into his eyes and mouth, the result of the bottle he had crashed into his skull. The professor then pulled out a lighter from his pocket and ignited the explosives he was wearing beneath his shirt. The explosives went off in a thunderous blaze, scaring away much of the audience.

At that point, somewhere in the audience, Nancy Vampirar, the professor's wife, in similar gear, was torching her explosives. The unsuspecting audience was now totally confused and did not know where to turn next.

She bore a hole through the terrified crowd with her flaming, firecracking ornamentation, right onto the stage where the professor was eagerly waiting. They collided... bang! Like two streaking comets they rolled around the arena in a bizarre mating ritual that was culminated when the professor's assistant, Doctor Delanda, dumped upon them a bucket chockful of a foul, indescribable scum. They rolled off behind the stage. The professor returned from backstage, his eyes glowing red above the cadaverous head of a Jersey pig he now wore. In his right hand he carried a double-barreled 12-gauge shotgun. In his left, a



Steven Greshaw

box of live mice. Professor Momboozoo then raised the mice to his mouth and ripped their squealing heads off with his grinding jaw. Fear and disgust wrapped its slimy tentacle around the wincing theater. Finally, the professor's shotgun vomited a blaze of white terror and the sea of people who remained erupted into a storm of chaotic pandemonium.

—Copper John V

The incident described above was Joe "Professor Momboozoo" Coleman's Voodoo performance at New York's famous art theater, The Kitchen, which caused a wave of controversy in the subversive tradition of the surrealists Bunuel and Dali.

Mister Coleman usually prefers to stage his bizarre events in a totally virgin crowd, such as the time he invaded a 10th-anniversary high-school reunion as a member of the class who had died five years earlier in a car accident. Joe, bearing a vague resemblance to the class member, joined in the reunion festivities, including dancing with the high-school president while the alma mater was playing. But Joe is one who likes to go out with a bang, and he ended the evening by characteristically blowing himself up, then casually walked out in the smoke as the confused alumni ran out in a panic.

As a performer, one of Joe's best-known roles is Mad Dog, the Wild Man of Borneo, in the pioneer performance art band Steel Tips, performing songs like "Krazy Baby, You're Driving Me Krazy" (which in 1978 was released as a 45), and "Kill All Teenagers." With Steel Tips on TV's "The Uncle Floyd Show," Joe introduced bloodletting to children's television.

Coleman's artwork is equally outrageous, claustrophobically packed with a host of grisly images and coded messages. His method is strange in itself; he paints and draws without sketching. Beginning at any point, he slowly unravels the images detail by detail.

Earlier this year Coleman released *The Mystery of Wolverine Woo-Bait*, his large format, 11"x14", comic-book epic. This insanely dense occult novel is inhabited by a diseased cast of characters, all hell-bent on obtaining the decapitated head of Sen. Albert Muro.

/ text continued on page 44







Jack Abraham

To sum up Mister Coleman's unique form of expression: He has set about to rape his own mind, to shed mental taboos while remaining as taboo as possible. He has recklessly thrown his sanity under the wheels of a derailed downbound streamliner; regained consciousness and still doesn't walk with a limp. □





THE RIGHT STUFF

The 1983 harvest is in and the Connoisseur has his work cut out for him. This year the most provocative offering is something called "Jamaican Flying Saucer" smoke. Sounds celestial, don't it?

by "R"

Has "R" lost the Right Stuff? Don't think I don't know some of you were talking behind my back. I heard the whispers, the rumors.

First he denounces Cannabis indica, the most popular form of grass around. Then he announces he's given up smoking any grass at all. And he even tries to convince people to substitute "hypnotic trigger words" or some such weird stuff for actually smoking dope. Maybe he just can't cut it as a Connoisseur anymore

I've heard the talk. I've heard a lot of hothead potheads mouthing off and I decided to put a stop to it. I decided—even though I'm still in favor of cutting down the quantity of my cannabis consumption and that of the nation as a whole—that it was time once again to demonstrate that when it comes to knowing quality, when it comes to an almost instinctive attunement with the soul of the smoke, when it comes to the ability to smoke five varieties of grass from all over the world in succession and yet still be able to recite the four-generation genealogy of the seed stock of a sixth, there's no one in the world with the Right Stuff like the Connoisseur.

But it wasn't out of merely selfish concern for my reputation that I decided to demonstrate once again the tasting skill that had made me a living legend, a folk hero among the mass of America's forty million marijuana smokers.

No, it's more than that. It's a civic duty I have a responsibility to the public to maintain quality control, to prevent widespread fraud rip-off, warn

against the poisonous distortion of consciousness that an influx of inferior weed can cause.

Remember, the marijuana consumer has no federal regulatory agencies. Your ordinary occasional weekend recreational smoker has no FDA testing and grading the product, no FTC to prevent false claims from being made by dealers. (Can't you imagine the kind of scenes that would go down if certain dealers had to justify their selling lines to some bureaucrat: "Now, sir, when you say this product will 'get you ripped out of your fucking skull'—I believe those were your words—what is the objective basis for such a claim, and as for this alleged 'dynamite shit direct from Humboldt County'—do you happen to have a shipping label on hand...?")

Think of it: with a dangerous drug like alcohol that kills 40,000 people a year in car accidents—not to mention the families destroyed, the children and wives battered by alcoholics, the human wreckage on the Boveries—the federal government has a billion-dollar regulatory apparatus in place to insure the poisonous product is as strong as its dealers claim it is. Consumers of alcohol have an army of inspectors working for them night and day to insure their poison is pure, unadulterated, the correct vintage, the right grains.

But with marijuana there's just me. Without me there are no standards, no one to warn against inferior product, false claims. No one to prevent the consumer from being ripped off by clever-selling scams and dangerous trends. You won't find your friendly neighborhood dealer ever telling you the Colombian he's selling is mildewed ware-

housed dirtweed that doesn't get you high unless you think motion sickness is a trip. Nor is he going to tell you that the "Buddha sticks" he's selling are grade-C fake Thai sticks that were probably grown in a graveyard in Juarez.

I have a responsibility for quality control. It fits in with my belief that most people should smoke less. A puff or two of something truly exquisite is worth a pound of something that's just plain dopey.

And so I decided to go on a Lost Weekend... An intense, concentrated tasting tour that would once again put my hand on the pulse of the pot industry of America.

It was harvest time. From all over America the cream of the crop was being bundled up and sent off to that metropolis of the East known as the Big Kilo, the place where each precious little bundle or bale would make the biggest bundle of money. Discreetly I let the word out: the Connoisseur is once again condescending to sample and evaluate the current harvest.

Well, it didn't take long before word got out: "R" is *tasting again*. But not for long. And so it came to pass that secret compartments all over town were opened, the finest herbal treasures, the first fruits of the fall harvest were brought forth and laid before the Connoisseur.

What a scene. A little after-hours club in Lower Manhattan closed its doors to its chic clientele, the South American capital flight billionaires whose limos crowded the industrial neighborhood that was its temporary home. (It's moved by now.)

It was dim inside. I didn't recognize

any identities. But the shadowy figures spoke knowledgeably. As they should have—after all, they were regular readers of the Connoisseur column. They knew how important my aesthetic judgments were to the creative consciousness of the artists and musicians of Lower Manhattan. How my decisions could affect the sound, the vision of American culture for decades to come. They knew how humble I was before the magnitude of the task.

And they knew I loved Jamaican ganja.

And so it came to pass that it was then and there that "R" got to taste his first "Jamaican Flying Saucer." Ah, yes. Some people remember exactly where they are at the moment of assassinations, earthquakes, floods. Well, I do, too. But I think I'll always remember exactly where I was when I took my first puff of some Jamaican Flying Saucer weed. Problem is, I'm not sure where I was when I took my second puff. Sure it was the same place physically. But metaphysically. Well, you understand why they call them Flying Saucers.

Well, actually that's not true. There's a more mundane reason they call them Flying Saucers. They come in the form of thin black disks, about the size, and half the thickness, of hockey pucks. In fact, some people call them "hockey pucks." But when you consider they're made out of extremely compressed, extremely dense Jamaican buds, blackened with ganja residue, and when you consider the kind of hyper-space-drive high, Flying Saucers is a good name.

For something so hyper-spatial in its effects, your basic Jamaican Flying Saucer is intensely earthy in its physical manifestation. As dark and compressed as a seam of coal miles beneath the earth. An uncompromisingly earthy, heady, nearly fermented aroma, a charred and dusky roots-moss kind of taste, mon.

But the high: so paradoxically airy and soaring and ethereal and effervescent. It's that Jamaican sativa strain, the hint of holy lamb's bread Rasta weed in every inhalation. It's the weed that brought forth upon the land the soaring hypnotic upbeat trance music of reggae. It's the smoke that fueled the fire of Bob Marley and soothed the soul of Bunny Wailer. With every breath of smoke you catch a fire, as Mr. Marley used to say.

And that wasn't the only Jamaican weed there. From the looks of it, Jamaica has been making a comeback. I've

The best Hawaiian weed is always better than the best Californian in a given room.

heard that the word is that the new, ostensibly "free enterprise" regime in Jamaica, which replaced the Michael Manley regime, is allowing all kinds of enterprises more freedom. And that seems to include smuggling, because more quantity and more varieties of Jamaican seem to be available these days.

That day I sampled some dark Jamaican semisense—compressed colas, fresher than the Flying Saucers. A very airy, somewhat more lightweight high than the hockey pucks. But extremely long-lasting, one of those highs that reaches plateaus, then regenerates some momentum and takes off again.

But the surprise of the day was the Jamaican dirtweed. A discovery that's led me to make one of those rare, sweeping pronouncements. In general I believe aesthetic judgments that are made about the character of an entire country's cannabis are misleading because of the extraordinary wide range of quality and high to be found within any given set of national borders. Nonetheless, there are some general rules I've discovered to be almost infallible. Among them:

The best Hawaiian weed is always better than the best Californian in a given room.

And:

Anyone trying to sell you "authentic Buddha sticks" is a fool or a fraud.

And now I think we can add

Cheap Jamaican dirtweed is better than cheap Colombian dirtweed.

Because this stuff was not class dirtweed at all. It was dirty dirtweed. It looked and smelled like dried crumbled dirt. It was harsh and hot in the throat. But unlike the sickening, dizzy, blurred and stupefied feeling you get from bad Colombian dirtweed, the high was upbeat and energetic. Great stuff to take to a reggae club.

You're probably wondering just how at this point I was able to proceed on and somehow judge the subtle differences among the dozen other varieties that had been selected for me to taste the state of the art. Well, it's my job, and I'm good at it. Somebody has to do it. There was South African grass, and grass grown in Wisconsin from South African seeds, and I was able to tell them apart even though Durban, South Africa, source of the notorious "Durban poison" marijuana and the pastures of Wisconsin are on corresponding latitudes in their respective hemispheres.

And speaking of respective hemispheres: both sides of my brain got a full workout from sampling the rainbow of California "purples" that were offered. I sampled one major cannabis-growing state's prize-winning "Bud of the Year." There were sativas and there were indicas, and "R" unerringly distinguished between them even when he didn't see the buds. On all but one occasion he could tell from dry-toking the joint which was a sativa and which an indica. On that one it took him just one puff. He was able to do the same in the more difficult task of distinguishing Hawaiian from some Californian varieties specifically bred to seem Hawaiian. But "R" has been to Hawaii. Once, even physically. He knows these things.

All of these distinctions were made after having sampled several other highs in succession. The shadowy sources murmured their admiration. Once again the Connoisseur had demonstrated his virtuosity. No one would doubt for some time now that he was the last word on matters of taste. He still has the Right Stuff.

And what did the Connoisseur have to say about those other dozen varieties? We'll get to that in the second half of my harvest analysis, in next month's issue. For now, I don't want them to share the spotlight with the Jamaican resurgence, led by those Flying Saucers. These days, in the wide world of weed, it's Jamaica that's got the Right Stuff. □

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What with everyone contributing his opinion to the indica-sativa controversy, Ed figured it was time that you were told just exactly what the difference is between these two marijuana strains.

Dear Ed,

What do you do when you cut the light back to eight hours and the plants still do not flower?

—Paul M.
Dallas, Tex.

Check for interruptions in the darkness cycle. If the darkness is interrupted by light for even a moment, the plants' transition to flowering will be delayed.

Dear Ed,

I'd like to know if it is a good idea to work organic fertilizers into the ground in the fall and let it decompose over the winter, and whether it will be ready to compost by the spring?

—John S.
Ill.

Yes, to both parts of your question. Working organic fertilizers into the ground in the fall will improve the quality and fertility of the soil. Any high nitrogen (N) fertilizer will decompose over the winter.

Some guerrilla farmers collect organic debris from the planting area into a pile and then spread a high N commercial fertilizer such as a 21-5-3 lawn food (without herbicides) into the pile. The N is used by bacteria and is converted into organic N as the pile shrinks into a rich compost. Farmers like the concentrate because it is easier to carry. To get the equivalent amount of N of a 100-pound bag of fertilizer with 21 percent N, one would have to come up with 700 pounds of cow manure.

This month there was a tie for **Garden of the Month**. The first is a homemade hydroponic unit in a greenhouse, sub-

mitted by "Captain Cook" of Hawaii:

The plants were started using perlite in Styrofoam cups, then placed in larger containers filled with black lava. Pumps and misting equipment supply irrigation. Natural illumination was used.

We use flowering and sexing greenhouses. Our strains mature in two to three months. We grow fifteen to twenty plants; each in a one-gallon bag, for six weeks, then plant the remaining females in the flowering houses.

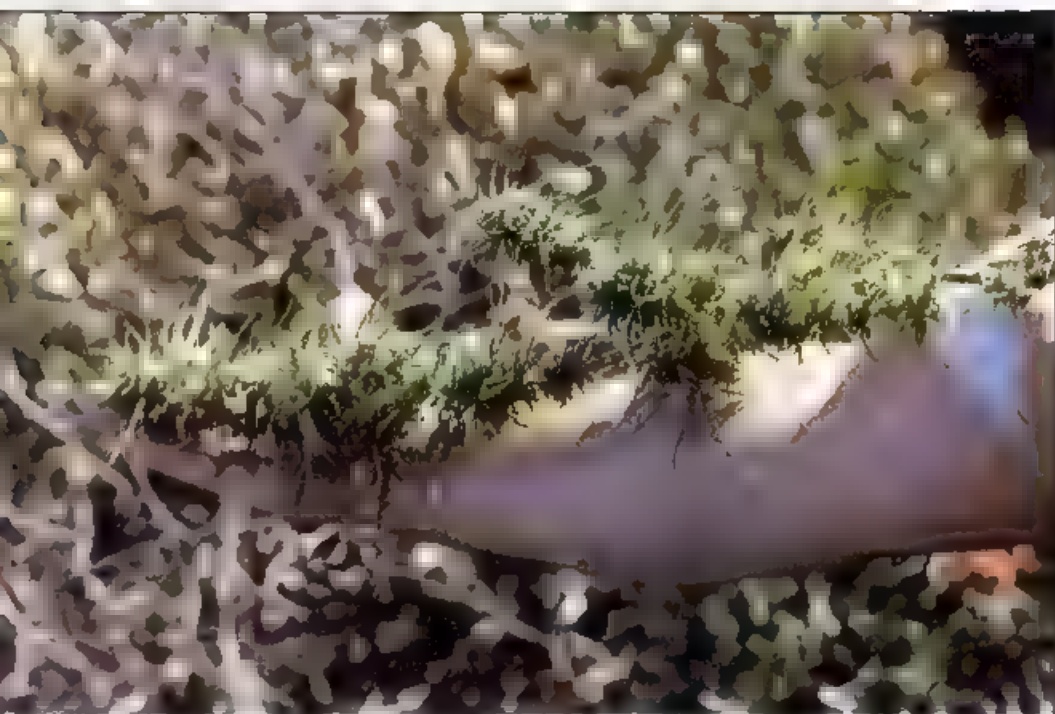
Nine hours of light makes them bud and grow the least. Nine and a half hours makes them stretch out on top. Eight and a half hours makes them brown out prematurely. A house like this (ten feet by eighteen feet) is worth between two and four pounds every four months. The two-month plants are constantly picked, while the three-month plants get really gungy in a few more weeks. We harvest daily, clipping here and there.



Twenty-two ounces grown from quality seed stock—Thai and Colombian from '77, courtesy of Anonymous of Illinois.



Garden of the Month, bursting out of Hawaiian black lava beds.



Buds of the Month, Sacramento Big Rogues that pick you up instead of knocking you on your ass

The other **Garden of the Month** winner writes:

Dear Ed,

Just thought I'd drop you a line and a picture showing that we don't waste the winter months away doing nothing. Here's my first harvest indoors which was prompted by an insufferable allergy to poison ivy. I can't grow outdoors, but twenty-two ounces, as shown, isn't bad in my book. Plus, I had four ounces of skunk, not pictured because it matured so fast—and I smoked it accordingly. I was lucky to have an excellent seed stock of reliable history including real Thai, Michoacán, good ole homegrown and Colombian that dated back to 1977. About five seeds of the Colombian, out of five thousand, germinated. Those were the best.

—Anonymous
Somewhere in Ill.

The **Bud of the Month** winner writes.

Dear Ed,

Enclosed are some shots of a very special, or maybe the word is "different," strain of indica that produces buds sometimes yielding as much as fifty-six to sixty grams. These Big Rogues are beautiful, and near the end of the cycle will go from a strong skunk smell to a sweet pungent aroma of pine—which spells dynamite. Out of roughly a hundred plants a year,

there is a yield of fifteen to twenty purple ladies which are without a doubt the premier pot of California. These ladies dress themselves in purple leaves with gold veins, and the resin-rich buds have bracts that resemble kernels of corn on the cob. The bud does not produce a comatose state, but rather picks up the high side and generates action not the "Ass Flopper" that some overpowering pots produce. You can operate well behind this strain and there's very little if any paranoia in sight. I think this product will stand side by side with the best.

The grass is grown in greenhouses in the Gold Region of California. There's not tons of it each year but the yield is always anxiously waited for. It's always a special treat.

—John
Sacramento area, Calif.

Dear Ed,

Is there a sure-fire way to tell indica from sativa?

—College student
Manhattan, Kans.

There are hundreds of thousands of distinct varieties which we broadly categorize into groups such as sativa or indica. If we think of sativa and indica as the opposite ends of a spectrum, most plants fall somewhere between the two ends.

In the United States, where intensive breeding programs are carried out by

cultivators, distinct lines are often crossed and recrossed to produce hybrids and new varieties that have the characteristics of both parents.

Even in traditional marijuana-growing countries the marijuana is often the result of several crossed lines. Jamaican ganja, for example, is probably the result of crosses between hemp, which the English cultivated for rope, and Indian ganja, which arrived with the Indian immigrants who came to the country. The term for marijuana in Jamaica is ganja, the same as in India, and the traditional Jamaican term for the best weed is Kali, named for the Indian killer-goddess.

Indica is a short plant, usually under 6 feet in height—rarely over 8 feet. Its leaves have short, wide fingers and are deep green, often tinged with purple. At maturity, though, the leaves may turn completely purple. Indica has short branches laden with heavy thick buds which mature early; usually between late August and the end of September. The bud colors vary from dark green tinged with purple to entirely purple. Under cool conditions this coloration becomes more intense. The buds have little problem maturing under the cooling conditions of late autumn.

Indica buds smell "stinky, skunky or pungent" and their smoke is thick—even a small toke will often induce coughing.

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"R" thinks of the high as numbing, but the best indicas have a relaxing "social" high, which allows one to sense and feel the environment, but does not lead to thinking about or analyzing the experience.

Aside from recent colonizations, indica is found in Afghanistan, Kashmir, Pakistan and the Tashkent region (in Soviet Central Asia), and perhaps some surrounding areas. These areas all fall within the 25-40th parallels and are characterized by seasons with extremely variable weather. One year it is rainy, the next it is hot, and the next dry and so on. For that reason the population's gene pool is heterogeneous, the plant's characteristics vary regarding all phases of their growth, including maturation time and climactic preferences. Thus, in any season, no matter what the weather, some plants will do well. The THC/CBD ratio also varies. Poor-quality indica marijuana and hashish contain high percentages of CBD. The smoker often feels disoriented, sleepy, drugged or confused. I think that "R" was complaining about this poor grade in his October column.

Sativa plants vary from about 6 feet to over 25 feet in height. Most varieties grow from about 8 to 12 feet. The leaves have long, thin fingers and are light green—especially the equatorial varieties which have less chlorophyll and more yellow pigments to protect the plant from the intense light. Temperate varieties are darker green. The leaves of some varieties yellow and fall as the plant matures.

The plants have long branches which spread up to 3 or 4 feet from the central stalk. Their buds are long and thin, sometimes stretching 2 feet along the branch and turning red as they mature in a warm environment; in cooler environments the buds may be tinged slightly purple.

The maturation time varies considerably. Midwestern hemp matures in August and September. Equatorial varieties often mature in late October, November and December. Equatorial buds need a lot of light to thicken and swell. Under the low-light conditions found in most parts of the United States in late autumn (and contained in most indoor growing systems), equatorial buds send out thin buds which are nevertheless potent.

The buds smell sweet, fruity and perfumed, and their smoke is usually smooth and easily inhaled.

Sativa plants are found all over the

world and include most of the commercial equatorial varieties such as Panamanian, Colombian, Nigerian and Congolese. Traditionally, there are also higher-latitude plants such as Jamaican and Mexican from the 15-25th parallel and Southern African from the 30th parallel. Above the 30th parallel sativa plants are grown as hemp.

THC/CBD content and ratio of most sativa is homogeneous because they grow primarily in areas where the weather is relatively uniform each year: it's always hot around the equator, and the Midwest of the United States gets hot in summer, has a cool autumn and is frozen in winter.

CBD/THC ratio does vary by the latitude where the plants were traditionally grown. Equatorial varieties are the most potent, with high THC, low CBD ratios. As the distance from the equator increases, the ratio of CBD to THC increases. Northern Mexican has as much CBD as THC. (This does not mean that a high-THC plant will produce more CBD in a northern climate, but that the populations of plants from different areas evolved different chemical ratios.)

In *Doors of Perception*, Aldous Huxley described the brain as a filter allowing in only those sensations vital for the organism's survival. He believed that psychedelics interfered with the brain's ability to filter extraneous thoughts and sensations. With the best sativas, we view the world in new ways. Sativa is the grass that spaced out the '60s generation. It soars like a rocket.

Unfortunately, the prognosis for commercial equatorial sativa is not good. Farmers do not like it because it matures late. Indoor growers find that sativa takes 30-60 days longer than indica to mature, increasing the risk of a ripped-off/busted crop. Over the past few years indica has developed a commercial mystique and the market is indica oriented.

Ed welcomes all inquiries, questions, comments and tips about marijuana cultivation. If your question is used you will receive a free copy of *The Marijuana Growers Guide*, deluxe edition. Send in your photos for the Bud of the Month, Plant of the Month and Garden of the Month contest. Also, don't forget to send in your recipes for the great HIGH TIMES Bake-off. All recipes should include instructions for using leaf. Recipes and winners to be announced later in the year. Valuable prizes will also be announced. (You better believe the prizes are going to be good!) □

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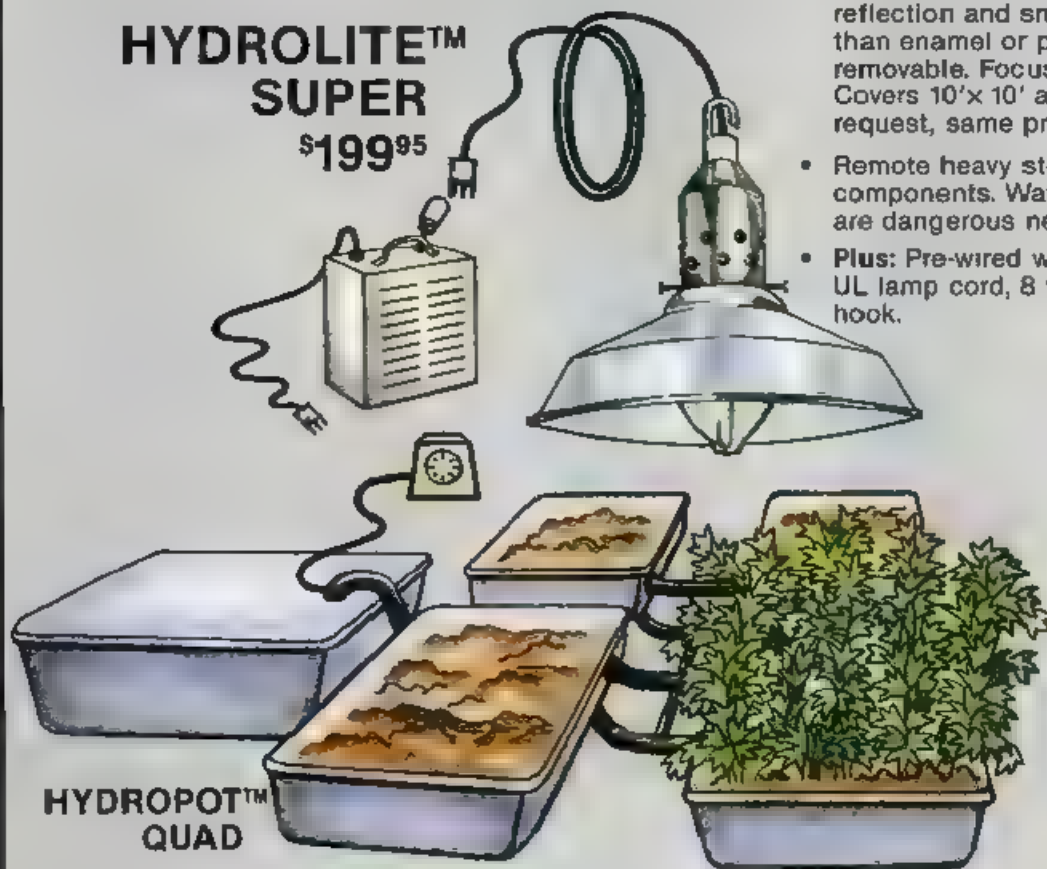
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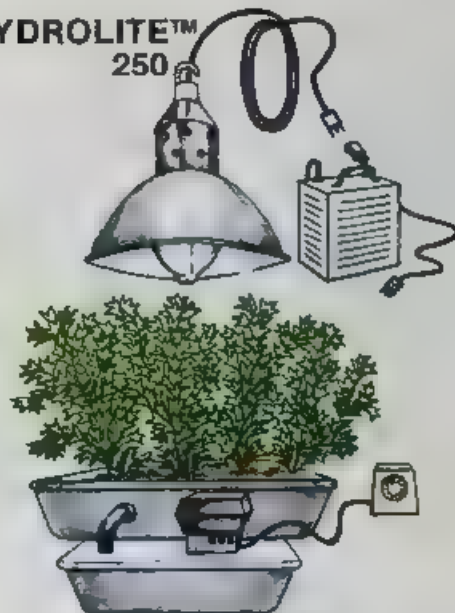


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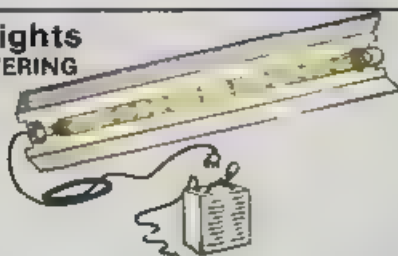


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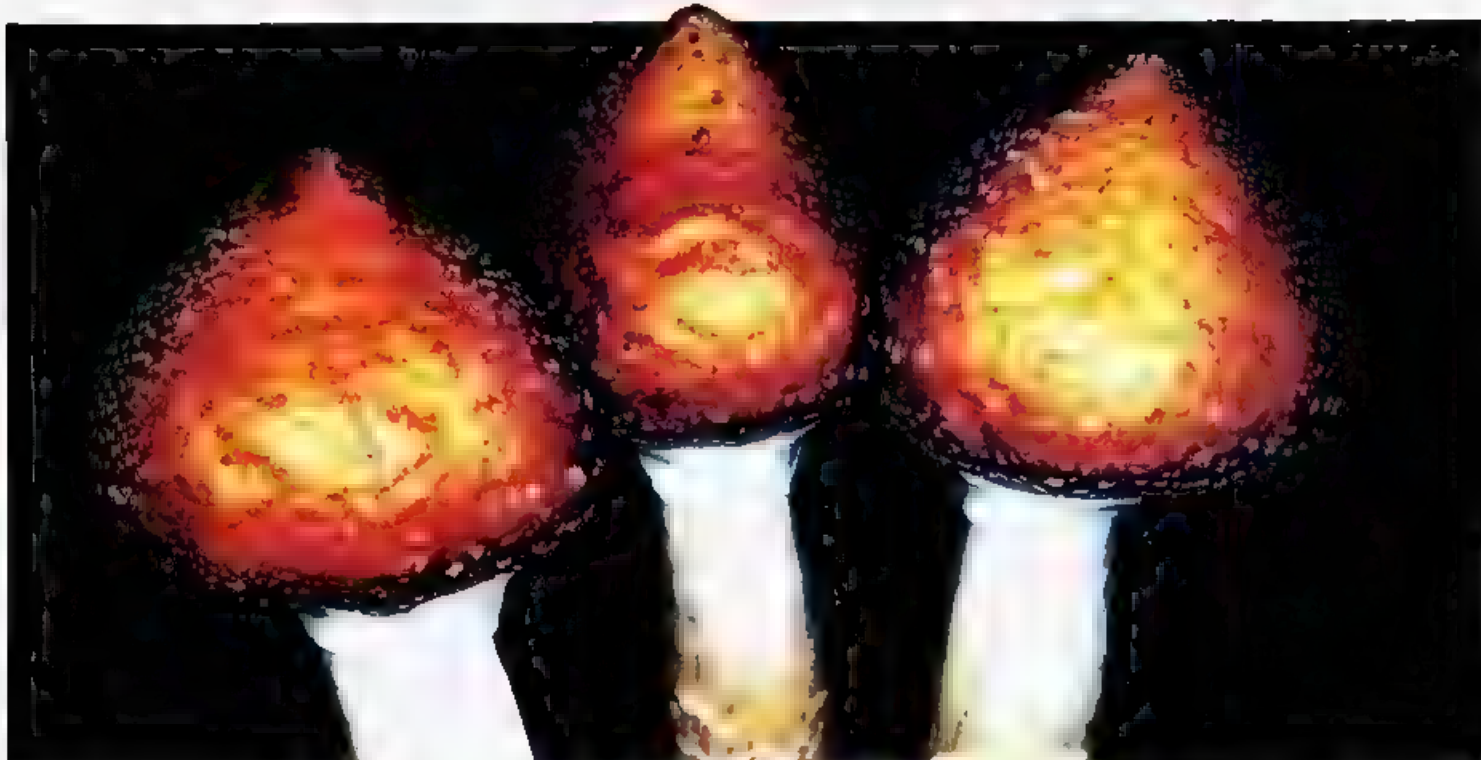
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"**C**hon Chemical Company. Mark speaking."

"Hi, Mark. Hey, I saw your ad in Popular Science this month."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah, and uh, thing is, I was thinking first about answering that ad up at the top of the column, just above yours, where it says 'CCC' in Abilene, Texas. Is that CCC the same as your CCC? Like a holding company?"

"Y'know, Ah saw the same thing, and Ah can't understand it. That company in Abilene's no relation to us. Must be a misprint."

"Yeah, well... Can you handle anthranilic acid?"

"Ah surely can."

"Can you handle orthotoluidine?"

"Sure thing."

"Well, um... What goes with anthranilic acid and orthotoluidine, Mike? You got any idea?"

"I don't think I heard you properly. What's the question again?"

"Aw, I guess I'll have to go through this synthesis report one more time. In the meantime, think you could send me a Chon catalog?"

"Ah surely can."

"Great. Send it to Dean Latimer. Latimer, one t, not two. I'm at 17 West Sixtieth Street, New York, New York 10023. Got that okay?"

"Yup."

"Oh, and send it care of HIGH TIMES magazine, okay? Goodbye."

Thanks, I suppose, to that last little bit of persnickiness, I never did get a copy of the Chon catalog from the Chon

Chemical Company of Mansfield, Ohio. Also, about a week after that conversation, on 29 July 1983, I reported the Chon Chemical Company, along with several other purported chemical companies, to the "Compliance" wing of the Food and Drug Administration in Washington: "They're selling ergotamine tartrate," I told the FDA. While I wish no evil to poor Mike—even despite his atrocious accent problem—I had no choice but to sic the Food and Drug Administration onto him. "His dope-chemical ad is running in this magazine!" I squawked to FDA Compliance investigator Al Lavetta.

That Chon Chemical ad was a real coup for the filthy, lying, conniving thugs running Operation Test Tube for the DEA. It was the first chemical-company ad that had managed to slip past an ad director here since "Apex Publishing" ran for eight months in 1981, and numerous people were busted for answering it.

You can read the Apex Publishing ad up there in the Popular Science classifieds. The exact same ad, right down to the Times Square box number and the parenthesis within the parentheses, ran in HIGH TIMES from July of 1981 to April of 1982. I mean, read it. It's not a chemical company, it's a publishing company, supposedly; what they're supposedly offering for sale are synthesis reports, documents which can be very simply retrieved from any chemical library, or from the United States Patent Office in Washington. You or I could put together a catalog of dope-synthesis reports, copyright it and legally offer it for sale

in any magazine we wanted. When I saw this ad for the Apex Publishing Company in 1981, I assumed someone had gone and done this simple, obvious thing. Why would the police ever bother to do that? What could they possibly get out of it?

As a matter of fact, so far as I know, the police never have done that. The Apex Publishing Company publishes nothing. It's not listed in the New York City directory, it's not incorporated in New York State and its money orders to the HIGH TIMES ad department were traceable no further than a bank in Newark, and they were signed by one "Joseph Longello," who does not exist.

Apex is just a Times Square post-office box leased by DEA agent Victor Pedalino of the Newark office, who also runs a fraudulent chemical-supply warehouse there called "Vara Scientific." Nobody who answers an Apex ad, in Popular Science or in HIGH TIMES or in any other publication, ever hears a thing from Apex. They do, however, tend to hear from the DEA in a variety of its other repulsive impersonifications.

There was "Georgia Lab Supply," for example. Though they never advertised in HIGH TIMES, the folks at Georgia Lab Supply did offer their services to all the college students of the East Coast through ads in campus magazines and newspapers. An acquaintance of mine who works in a state-police forensic laboratory saw a Georgia Lab ad in a campus paper a couple years back, and—his cop suspicions all aroused—sent for the "precursor catalog" they were offering for \$3, and got it.

"It was pornographic, for a chemist," he tells me. "They were all dope chemicals, and nothing but dope chemicals. Of course, you'd have to know a little bit about general organic chemistry to realize that these were strictly drug chemicals and if you knew just that little bit about chemistry, and nothing at all about the law, you probably would think, 'Hey! Here's some clever chemist who's figured out a way to outwit the police.' It might even look romantic, to a rebellious sort of young kid—like a chemistry major in undergrad college, which is where this filth was being advertised."

My chemist chum, like cop chemists everywhere, has a direct line to an officer in the Compliance bureau of the DEA in Washington. He shipped this pornographic catalog to his own DEA Compliance officer, and telexed his suspicions to her: if this company is real then they're breaking the law. "She looked around a few days," he recalls "and then called back and said it was okay, and to forget about it."

It was right about the same time my police acquaintance did this, in late '81, that a couple of brothers in Kentucky received in the mail that same highly pornographic chemical catalog from Georgia Lab Supply. These guys were not college kids, just local Joes in Louisville who fancied that they knew a cut more than most folks about chemistry, and about dope. When they saw that Apex Publishing Company ad in *HIGH TIMES*—"P-2-P, DMT (specify), etc."—they conceived the notion of making mescaline, about which they thought they knew a cut more than most folks. So they sent off to Apex, specifying mescaline as their target drug.

Within a week, they were in receipt of a Georgia Lab catalog. Besides all the pornographic precursors, there was a chummy section inviting folks to call in for "technical assistance," for free! (No, they had never seen a commercial chemical catalog before.) Well, hell they called in and started asking real sneaky technical, chemical questions.

Since the cops running Georgia Lab already knew these boys were into making mescaline, from their response to the Apex ad, they were referred by Georgia Lab Supply to one "Willie," a voice over the telephone from a South Florida area code, who somehow knew everything there is in the world to know about making mescaline. Willie never met them in person (before they were arrested), but he read them out a right dandy synthesis for mescaline, over the recorded phone. Willie also

told them exactly how to set up a mescaline operation: glassware, heating units and precursors, all available real cheap from Georgia Lab Supply. They asked Willie his last name, and he told them they should be cooler than that—over the phone and all—and that was pretty thrilling too. (Willie here was William Kaiser, who runs the gas-liquid/mass-spec gear at the DEA's Southeastern Regional Laboratory: one of the top lab techs in the whole Justice Department.)

So in the fullness of time, those two local boys were busted on an island out in the middle of Lost Lake, with a bubbling reaction vat full of mescaline precursors, and about a cup of ill-crystallized mesc. In court, in the process of disclosure motions, the DEA agents running Georgia Lab Supply had to disclose how they'd known these two particular boys had a criminal predisposition to cook up mescaline. Otherwise, why'd the DEA ever mail their sting catalog to these particular boys, if not to outrightly entrap them? So the DEA trotted out the boys' letter to Apex Publishing, with the word "mescaline" in it, to show probable cause to suspect this criminal disposition, and disclosed the fact that Apex Publishing Company is nothing more than a letter drop for the DEA's Operation Test Tube.

"We sure are sorry now," these brothers told *HIGH TIMES* news editor Richard Covington from their Louisville, Kentucky, cell, "that we answered that ad. We used to trust all the classified ads we read, but now..." And the sniveling went on fit to break your heart.

Well, it sincerely did break Covington's. He was new here, he hadn't read a lot of jail letters, and it made him nearly physically ill to see the incredible way the feds had jacked these boys around. He did it up real big in the News section for April 1982—*HIGH TIMES* UNDER ATTACK! was his headline—and he described it all like 1984 come two years early. Covington was a nice, warm-hearted guy, and he retired into travel-magazine publishing right after that.

As for these two Kentucky boys, they never did manage to guilt-trip any lawyer money out of us, and last I heard they were still in federal prison. But at least they actually made some dope, according to the sworn word of DEA officers, even if the damned officers had to hold their hands and lead them step by step through the synthesis.

What happened to Carl Peterson

that year, though, really was 1984 come two years early. Carl Peterson, 33, with no priors of any sort, was sentenced to two years of federal time for reading *Popular Science* and then thinking of making dope.

I don't ordinarily mention defendants' names in dope cases, because it can make trouble for them sometimes. Carl Peterson, though, brought his story to me himself, and he wants it written up. I can see his point, too. Carl Peterson was charged and convicted of the crime of wishful thinking, and of absolutely no other crime in the book.

In May 1982, Carl Peterson of Battle Creek, Michigan, answered the Apex Publishing Company ad in *Popular Science*. He signified to Apex that he wanted synthesis reports for a whole anthology of mainly legal compounds, among which were a few controlled substances, including methamphetamine. Within days the DEA sent him a copy of an exceedingly pornographic chemical catalog from their spook outfit in Westmont, Illinois, called "Universal Solvents of America" (USA). When Peterson called the number on the catalog cover, he wound up talking to a great old DEA special agent named Mel Schabillon—"Mel Sanders," he told Peterson—who has been enforcing dangerous drugs for 15 years now, since the good old kick-in-the-door days of the BNDD. I have spoken with Agent Schabillon myself—it was the only way I could get a USA catalog—and I can't help but respect him, in a curious way. The DEA doesn't give 15-year veterans this sort of work to do unless their service records are entirely untarnished of any remotest trace of corruption; and anyone who's gotten through all the corruption scandals and integrity probes that the BNDD/DEA's sustained since 1969, and still has a badge and a gun and an active field position, has to have turned down literally millions of dollars in bribe money.

No, Agent Schabillon told Carl Peterson in June 1982, he couldn't handle merchandising P2P, the main crank precursor, because the stuff's on Schedule II nowadays, like cocaine. But, said Agent Schabillon helpfully, he did have a kit for making P2P itself! He described his cute little \$700 kit in pornographic detail: all the tubes, the condensers, the stirrers, the sodium this and the meth-ylamine that and he described just exactly how to make P2P in a simple, three-step, 18-hour operation. Later on, Agent Schabillon was kind enough to lay the same rather challenging sting rap on me, and for about the first time

ever, I got just a *snuff* of the special enchantment that lies in the realm of organic narcotics chemistry.

Unlike me, however, Carl Peterson said "Yes" into USA's tape recorder when Agent Schabilion, after describing this lovely and economical chemical procedure, inquired if Carl would like to try his hand at it. "Yes," said Carl Peterson, on tape, and he was halfway to jail with that one syllable.

Americans in general simply don't know what "conspiracy" means in law, and Carl Peterson certainly didn't. To qualify for a "conspiracy" charge under 21 USC Title 846, Carl had to commit only two "overt acts" in the general direction of a potential crime. Saying "Yes" when asked if he might want to make P2P was one overt act, the court ruled later. He committed the other overt act just a month or so later, when—after Carl had laid out an unretrievable \$840, cash, to Universal Solvents of America—Agent Mel Schabilion's nifty P2P kit arrived in Battle Creek. That was the day of 9 September 1982, and Carl Peterson's second overt act consisted of picking up the shipment. Presently he was in the custody of the 12 narcotics agents who'd come along behind the P2P kit, which he never even got to open up and play with. Two overt acts: "conspiracy."

Now, for sure, that technique does beat having to try to coax some wigged-out dope chemist into shutting down his whole inflammable synthesis procedure, bit by bit, and hoping he doesn't blow up everybody at the bust site. Nail 'em before they can get past the nasty-thinking stage, and there's no way anybody can get hurt but the defendant. This is a great alleviation of headaches for narcotics officers everywhere.

The day after his conviction in Grand Rapids—25 June 1983—Carl Peterson called me at HIGH TIMES. He didn't want help, he didn't want lawyer money and he didn't even want vindication, exactly. Carl Peterson just wanted the whole world to learn about all the juicy stuff that came out in the DEA disclosures at his trial.

They'd designated the Apex post-office box as their sting, under sworn oath, right off first thing. Agent Schabilion had testified that he personally was Universal Solvents of America. And Kalamazoo defense attorney Joe Jerkins had got them to spill the names of all their other sting outfits which advertise, off and on, in *Popular Science*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Science Digest* and God only knows how many campus papers, naked-lady magazines and undoubted-

ly other publishing venues I'm not criminal enough to conceive of. Something called *Biker Lifestyle* was mentioned by the DEA in Carl's case.

"There's a company in the Midwest called Chon Chemical," Carl Peterson told me. "There's a place in New Jersey called Vara—Vara Scientific. There used to be one called Georgia Lab Supply around Atlanta, but I think it's been shut down by an earlier disclosure. There were a few others, too, but the agent who gave the testimony spoke this part of it so fast I couldn't take it all down. I won't have a transcript until after I'm sentenced, which will happen tomorrow." When people are going to jail, they tend to spend the last few days rapping on the phone like this. Carl Peterson did it right: he talked to me and to a *New York Times* reporter.

So in late June I scored a copy of *Popular Science*, and Jesus Christ, there they all were in the Classified section, along with Merrell Scientific of Rochester, still attracting hobbyists. (Merrell's a legitimate chemical company. They have wonderful relations with the police, too. I know a guy in Manhattan federal stir right now who was busted for conspiracy to make dope through Vara Scientific in 1981; during his trial, the DEA disclosed that a year previously, he'd received a shipment of Merrell's chemicals, delivered to his home by a DEA agent in a UPS uniform, driving a UPS truck full of videotape and eavesdrop gear. This guy never made a microgram of dope either, but he went to jail for wishing he could.) And so I commenced calling DEA agents on the phone, learning lots and lots about illicit-substance synthesis, and collecting DEA "watch-list" chemical catalogs.

These DEA sting catalogs are probably already worth a little money as collectors' items, so I've had mine cased in plastic. Anyone who wants to help my collection along, by sending in any old Georgia Lab Supply catalogs that may still be lying around their defense-lawyers' offices, will get a complimentary subscription to HIGH TIMES.

The Universal Solvents of America catalog is the most garish production imaginable, while the Vara Scientific item is modest, neat and quite—well—*scientific* in appearance. And there are other salient differences. The USA catalog's alphabetical listing begins counseling crime on the very first page, offering methyl alcohol, absolute ethyl alcohol and denatured ethyl alcohol—moonshine precursors that can't be fiddled with legally unless you're registered

/ continued on page 79

"This doesn't have anything to do with real drug chemists. Real narcotics chemists do not answer ads for precursor chemicals through mail-order firms that advertise in mass-market magazines..."

SPIES IN THE SKY, SPIES IN THE GROUND

If the real Stuart Bodman is alive and well, who was it they ambushed at the Khyber Pass last fall? by Terry Michaelson

Some say it was the *Mujahadeen* themselves who ambushed the British spook party on the road out of Badakshan last September. Others insist the *Mujahadeen* only betrayed the Brits to the Kabul government troops, who tipped them to the occupation Russian army, who then sent out a KGB spook team of their own to do the job, and make it look as though the hillside "freedom fighters" had done it. It all happened so far up on the northern Himalayan slopes—right on radar line-of-sight to the Uzbek, in fact—that historians will probably never know for sure who it was that greased "Stuart Bodman" and lifted all his wonderful American super-spook technology.

Stuart Bodman himself, glad to report, is alive and well in a little town in Surrey, casting darts in the corner pub as usual, and highly entertained by the hyper-romanticized accounts of his assassination in a rain of hot steel on a Himalayan hill trail. Although the Reds recovered an international AAA driver-registration from Bodman's "body" in Afghanistan—among numerous other persuasive-looking documents—the fact is that Stu Bodman has never had a driver's license at all, has never learned to drive and has only been out of Surrey a few times in his life.

"I've never been further than Jersey," Bodman told the *London Sunday Times* scribes Anthony Mascarenhas and Robin Morgan, after they traced him down through the documents, which were broadcast over Moscow television right after the Badakshan ambush. "The closest I've come to spies was when I caddied for Sean Connery at Kingston Hill Golf Club years ago."

Someone obviously pulled a Frederick Forsyth here (cf., *Day of the Jackal*). Some none-too-professional spy about Bodman's age went through the Surrey birth certificates for 1953, copped a male name at random—Bodman's name, as it turned out—and used it to procure

the AAA registration, the international vaccination certificate and the phony press credentials which the Soviet soldiers retrieved from that body after the firefight on the road from Badakshan. The world may never know who that lunatic was, exactly, or exactly who killed him: the *Mujahadeen*, the Soviet army or the KGB.

Certainly the KGB was involved in this business at some point along the line, because within weeks after the bloodshed, they were all over the Moscow media, arrogantly twitting their "security" counterparts in Washington, the ultraspooky Defense Intelligence Agency, which had spawned the whole lunatic mission. Since the American news services are just as tightly controlled as Tass and Izvestia, when it comes to matters pertaining to U.S. military security services, nobody in the States published anything about the Badakshan fiasco until weeks after the European media had already entertained and thrilled millions with it. Over that interval last fall, in fact, the U.S. media unaccountably rediscovered the never-ending "Silicon Valley technology leak" of supersensitive information to the USSR, and hysterically headlined it for weeks.

And so when the results of the Badakshan ambush eventually made any stateside copy at all, hardly anyone paid any attention, because it was hardly even news. In fact, the only truly newsworthy thing about it—that the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency itself was leaking its latest space-age spy gear to the KGB—really wasn't news at all. Happens all the time, it turns out. So many international spooks came out of the woodwork to talk confidentially to journalists after the Badakshan ambush, that none of the international spook agencies, Commie or otherwise, really have very many secrets just now.

"Stuart Bodman" here—the real Stuart Bodman's espionage *Doppelgänger*,

that is—was only around 30 years old, but he had that special ageless, aquiline, bearded aspect, punctuated with dark and reckless eyes, that have characterized British spooks in Muslimdom since long before the days of Sir Richard Burton, even. And the way the mission was set up, it was certainly intended to look like a typical Brit spook adventure, in case anything went wrong—as it most certainly did.

The Reds actually recovered credentials and letterhead papers from a phony British press agency—a ploy straight out of John Le Carre's *Honourable Schoolboy*—among "Bodman's" remains on the Badakshan road. And sure enough, after these documents were shown on Moscow telly, the Grub Street hacks in London promptly scribbled up the whole scandal about the "Gulf Features Services" news agency: nothing but an empty London storefront, incorporated last April by a peer named Sir Edgar Beck, whose visible means of support is the "honorary" chairmanship of a construction company called Mowlen, Ltd. "It's a complete mystery," Sir Edgar assured the *Observer's* scribes. "God help us, it's ridiculous," offered his wife, Anne. "I can say nothing." If their names had been "Mr. Smiley" and "Lady Ann," it could not have been more vintage Le Carre.

And to be sure, Smiley's stout old MI6 (the British secret intelligence service) self-admittedly operates a year-round spook center in Peshawar, Pakistan, just across the Khyber Pass from Soviet-occupied Afghanistan. Spooks and mercs, scribes and dope dealers, international arms dealers and whores and psychos of all descriptions enjoy MI6's spy facilities at Peshawar, where the lavender-tiled rooftop hot tubs reportedly afford an inspiring panorama of beautiful mountains and pestiferous refugee camps. Thither came this phony-papered incarnation of Stuart Bodman last April, with the ink still fresh on the

phony name on his phony press credentials, to link up with an indeterminate number of other adventurous Brits, for this hike across the Khyber.

Since some of these other spooks may possibly be still alive, and in deep jeopardy now from all the world's spook services, we'll only identify Paul Sessarego, who has already mouthed off to journalists all over the world. Sessarego is a lot more typical of the Peshawar "free-lancers," as they style themselves, than this young "Bodman" person was. In his own stripling youth, Her Majesty's Special Air Services (after whom the U.S. Green Berets are patterned) taught Sessarego how to parachute into hostile territory, anywhere in the world, and do wonderful and terrible things with anything from plain fish wire to the ingredients of a nuke. When creatures like Sessarego retire from Her Majesty's official service, it is decidedly in the woman's interest to provide them with wholesome, active, well-paid employment forever afterward. Otherwise they're likely to wind up like the CIA's Edwin Wilson, hiring themselves out to monsters like Idi Amin and Muammar Qaddafi, and causing no end of bloody trouble after they're finally caught and jailed.

Hence the opulent Peshawar spook spa, courtesy of MI6. The place is full of people like Paul Sessarego, who had "penetrated" Soviet Afghanistan plenty of times—and bragged all about it afterward to reporters—before he led young "Stu Bodman" up into the Khyber last spring.

Nobody knows exactly—or even approximately—what happened on the Badakshan road that day in September, but the Reds traced the party's track back to the major Soviet army transport center on the outskirts of town. This place is sort of the Russkie equivalent of Da Nang in old South Vietnam; and atop a little mesa overlooking it the KGB found, artfully camouflaged, some very wonderful technology from Motorola Electronics, Inc., of Scottsdale, Arizona.

Correct. Not British Leyland or Cifer Ltd., of England, not Jardine-Matheson of Hong Kong. This stuff was from Motorola of Arizona, and within weeks it was all over every television screen from Moscow to Leningrad to Paris to London. Within days after that, European journalists had extorted a confession out of the U.S. National Security Agency that yes, this spook gear was so ultrasophisticated that no American citizen outside of their top military se-

curity services could use it without incurring dire prison penalties.

Which is presumably why that dead spook on the Badakshan road was carrying British identification into Afghanistan, along with all this fabulous spook gear.

It wasn't much, in terms of weight "Bodman" probably schlepped it all neatly packed in a single briefcase, as spooks love to do, very likely handcuffed to his personal wrist. But it was special stuff, and heads must have been rolling all over the floors of the Pentagon when it all showed up on Red Communist television last fall.

The star exhibit was a beautiful little parabolic satellite transceiver unit, looking for all the world like a Motorola desk fan, circa 1950: simply four foot-long flat curving metal signal-receiving blades, projecting "X"-wise out of a porcupine of transmitter antennae. This wonderful little gizmo had been planted on a hillside facing south-southwestward, and tilted precisely so as to furnish it a clear line-of-sight transmission straight at a U.S. military satellite hanging motionlessly, in geosynchronous orbit, over the Indian Ocean.

To feed this satellite unit with data, there was a black rectangular artifact, about the size of a big box of Kellogg's Corn Flakes, which simply puts into the *pale* all the "sensitive technology" that ever leaked out of Silicon Valley into Russian hands. This incredible radar apparatus was oriented on the Soviet transport base at Badakshan, and it can simultaneously and independently monitor the activities of whole multitudes of human beings, of ground vehicles of all sorts, and of aircraft. And of course it intercepts communications over all possible broadcast spectra. The dissection of this little whatchamacallit could occupy a whole lab of Commie technicians for years on end, conceivably.

And there was more. Before they were fed into the satellite transceiver unit, all these sensitive Soviet military data went into a fabulous new scrambler-and-transmitter unit. This device, about the dimensions of a standard slab of Red Lebanese hashish, encrypted whatever inconceivable variety of information it got from the radar unit, and turned it into any of six million possible codes, each code-key changing at random intervals. It split the data up into information-constellations of 1,000 bytes apiece, and cast them forth in one-second bursts, through the parabolic transponder, to that U.S. military satellite 22,000 miles overhead. Best of

all, this encryption unit came furnished with a cute little ten-finger-touch alphanumeric keyboard, like a desktop word processor, for the use of any spook who might care to sneak up on this mesa overlooking Badakshan, from time to time, and punch out a personal note to the NATO spooks in Rome, or the MI6 spooks in Cheltenham, or the NSA in Washington, or the CIA in Langley.

The Brit press, for a while, was playing the Badakshan fiasco up as though it would surely spell curtains for the American military spy masters. The patriotic British public loved that line, understandably. The spectacle of America's top superspooks dropping their scariest spy gear straight into the hands of the Ivans, after all, made poor old MI6's incredible history of highest-level Soviet penetration look not so bloody stupid after all. And thus all things, for just a little while, were bright and lovely over here.

But then a couple of London *Observer* scriveners—Duncan Mil and Shyam Bhatia—had to go puncture the balloon. Early in October, just as everyone was beginning to feel quite complacent about the whole scandal, they interviewed Bob Raggett, editor of *Jane's Military Communications*, which keeps the whole world posted on the latest developments in military spook gear as it's declassified. Mil and Bhatia asked Raggett what he knew about this particular gear the Reds had recovered at Badakshan. "Well, you have to know exactly where the satellite is," Raggett began.

Right. If *Jane's* knows about this stuff now, then MI6 has known about it for a good long time. And the minute MI6 ever heard about it, in that same minute the Kremlin heard about it. And the American National Security Agency had to count on that too.

So this whole romantic story here was really never news at all, except to the honest and unsuspecting public. And to the loved ones of whomever it was that was blown to pieces on the Badakshan road with "Stuart Bodman's" papers on him.

There are rumors, inevitably, that Paul Sessarego at the SAS and some of the other free-lancers on the expedition got themselves out of Soviet custody somehow, and absconded back to Peshawar. But if it's true that they lived, it's curious none of them has blabbed the tale to some boozy scrivener by now.

—Knaresborough, Yorkshire,
31 October 1983



SPOOK TECH 1984

Welcome to the year of *countersurveillance*. Why not turn the tables on the bastards in this, their commemorative year. If Winston Smith had just a couple of these gizmos he'd have been able to shoot the hairy eyeball right back at Big Brother. by Mark Swain

The story of "Stuart Bodman," overleaf, just does not do justice to all the flaming romance of contemporary spook technology. There is absolutely no need to put one's life in the inept hands of bumbling government security agencies like Britain's MI6 and Virginia's CIA. Nowadays there are nearly a dozen international "industrial counterintelligence" firms that offer even better salaries to professional spooks than all those old-fashioned cloak-and-dagger outfits. Thus they get better talent, and their customers get better service. Plus there's no nationalistic ideology to get in the way and cramp any operative's personal style.

The following are excerpts from a 180-page "security assessment" I recently completed for a private client of my own. Most of the gear pictured here is merchandised by CCS, Inc., the oldest and most public of all the international counterintelligence merchandisers. CCS has offices in eight cities on four continents, and a mobile staff of over 3,000, who provide security consultations, antisurveillance sweep teams, antikidnapping training and various other intimate executive services, besides their unmatched line of antisurveillance (and surveillance) devices: bugs and bug detectors, taps and tap detectors, phone scramblers and unscramblers and so on ad paranoium.

But there are numerous other companies in this special line of executive service. A shopper would be wise to check them all out thoroughly before beginning to enlist their services. Because once you start contracting for spook technology from any one company, you aren't likely to ever feel safe switching to any of that company's competitors, are you?

TALK WITHOUT FEAR

"You know how the Good Guys really won World War II, right? The Nazi High Command was dumb enough to go through the whole war sending their top-security messages through a wireless encoding device called the ENIGMA, designed and patented long before the hostilities commenced. The Polish government actually had an ENIGMA model, and got it to the British secret services in the midst of the 1938 German invasion. After that, the Brits could eavesdrop on the whole Nazi brass, from Rommel to Guderian himself. And they did, and so they won.

"Things work better nowadays. This 'Securacorn SX-7' gummick from CCS, for instance, works pretty much on the basic ENIGMA principle, only it works over the phone lines. Like the ENIGMA, it takes two to coconspire. You and your long-distance partner both need identical Securacorns, keyed to the same signal system. You dial your buddy, he or she answers, and you drop your phone receivers into the units built-in cradles. Then you type out your messages back and forth on the keyboards, and they print out in digital letters on each others' TV screens. I understand that only top government spook agencies have the capability of detecting and decrypting the signals, which makes this one pretty near foolproof."

BETTER HOMES AND SAFEKEEPING

"The Bionic Safe," this one's called at CCS. (Their hardware is lots better

than some of their ad copy.) They'll model it into your home decor so that it looks like a bar stool or a samovar or even a toilet, if you wish. Thing is, if anyone but you even touches it without your permission, the thing sets off a shriek that travels for blocks. Or it trips a silently flashing light in the quarters of your security goons, if you prefer. Or a signal at your local police station, if they like you there.

"If the Bad Guy somehow manages to jimmy the lock to 'open' position, somehow, before he can get the door open, boom! Everything inside is destroyed (surely you keep copies!), and maybe it rattles the thief a little, but there's no corpse to have to dispose of. If you skip the boom-boom stuff, out of consideration for the safe's contents, you're still covered; when the Bad Guy opens the door, an instant blast of high-intensity light will knock him silly for ten minutes. Unless he remembers to wear his welding goggles, of course."

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"There are three basic sorts of bomb detectors, and among them they cover every sort of antipersonnel ordnance you'll ever encounter short of a nuke. For letter bombs, there's your basic metal detector, such as CCS's 'LBD-103.' Letter bombs all need copper wiring or detonator caps, and this thing lets out a squawk if it's passed over any sort of ferrous metal at all.

"Then there's pulse-detecting devices. Virtually every sort of time bomb has a pulse mechanism of some

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sort, even if it doesn't give off an audible tick. A good pulse indicator like the one from CCS—and nearly all these companies have pulse detectors—can pick up a rhythmic pulse even through metal walls. Of course, *some* time bombs work by allowing acids to gradually corrode the separation membrane between two mutually hostile explosive chemicals, which doesn't involve a pulse at all...

"So you score a bomb sniffer. All explosives, being by nature volatile—even solid gelignite—exude trace odors. A really comprehensive bomb-detection device, like the 'CCX-1000,' will beep its head off in the presence of explosive odors, and even tell you exactly what sort of explosive it's sniffing.

"But I have ethical reservations about this thing CCS calls their 'Bomb Ranger.' Trip this baby off and it'll detonate any radio-controlled bomb anywhere within five-eighths of a mile around you. Touch it off anywhere along the Avenue Camille Chamoun, and you're liable to send up a good deal of the neighborhood. Thankfully, you can't buy it in the United States.

"On the other hand, anywhere there's *already* a radio-controlled bomb, it's bound to go off very shortly anyhow, isn't it? Trip this thing every ten minutes or so, and by golly, the Bad Guys blow themselves up in the act of *planting* their nasty old radio-controlled bomb!"

COUNTERFEIT BILL DETECTOR

"Enough said. If you ever dip back in the dope trade, anywhere in the world, take along one of these babies. Dollars, pounds, deutsche marks, francs, what: the more people who have these gummicks, the steadier the international money market will be.

"One caveat: I hear the suckers tend not to work too well, at least not a hundred percent of the time. But if you just carry one around with you, it strongly discourages your business partners from papering you over with twenty-dollar bills that were minted in Medallin."

KIDNAPPERS, SCHMIDNAPPERS!

"When the kidnapppers grab your teenage daughter, she surreptitiously presses the windstem on her wrist-watch, and a signal goes out of it to your goon squad. Or when they jump you, you surreptitiously punch the plunger on your ballpoint pen, and

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your goons get the signal. Why, there's even a CCS long-distance 'alert' gimmick that is activated by the utterance of a particular word in your individual voice—'Abracadabra,' or whatever else you're likely to say when you meet a kidnapper—but for this one, you have to buy a whole clock-radio desk assembly which is necessary for its function. And your goon squad, of course, can be miles away, or right in the next car behind you, or even in the same room; and they can carry little cigarette-sized receivers close to their bodies, so that they're warned of the disaster by a soundless vibration of the gimmick next to their skin. And once they're alerted, presumably, they rescue you or your loves *tout de suite*."

THE BRIEFCASE FETISH

"You just know that the latest status symbol among up-and-coming young company executives is a briefcase crammed chock-full of antisurveillance (and surveillance) gear.

"Though all these components can be purchased individually, CCS has the cutest single way of jamming them all together—their 'Trionic Briefcase.' You can order from a wide range of styles, each lined with bulletproof Kevlar fabric which can do double duty as a handsome personal waistcoat. And inside you get:

"The voice stress analyzer. Sit there with your briefcase-top up before you, and ask your counterpart a few casual questions—'How's your mom, Ed?'—to get an 'honesty' baseline of numbers on the digital readout screen. After that, when he begins to lie, you'll have him by the numbers. Whereat you might employ

"The immobilizer flashgun. Also called the 'Security Blanket', five million lumens straight in the retina. He'll forget what state he's in for ten minutes, and be none the worse for wear afterward. And you also get

"The tape-recorder detector. Yes, some unethical scoundrels today think nothing of deceptively toting around hidden eavesdropping gear, such as

"The hidden tape recorder, which also comes with the Trionic Briefcase. Smaller than a pack of smokes, but it's got a four-hour tape. Of course, if the other guy's also got a tape-recorder detector, he's liable to get angry with you, and so you might also be thankful for

"The vapor detector. Looks a good deal like the Security Blanket, but it sniffs out bombs.

"Any old briefcase can be fitted

out with a little gimmick, right on the clasp, which alerts you when someone in your presence is wearing a radio transmitter; the clasp either flashes a little light, or maybe it just vibrates against your hand. And you can keep the keys to the case in plain view anywhere, purposely inviting some Bad Guy to open your case behind your back. When anyone but you touches that key ring, a silent alarm goes off in your breast pocket, and you know you've fallen into the company of thieves. Before the thieves know you know they're thieves, too. Dig it?

"Now, all that Trionic Briefcase gear is for dealing with people you don't trust. For dealing with people you do trust—and trust with your life—you need a whole assortment of other handsome briefcases. In fact, you and all your coconspirators—ah, *business partners*—will need matching briefcases, outfitted with the same wireless communications gear matched to identical code settings.

"CCS has a line of 'Secret Communications' assemblies that all include wireless phone systems with scrambler units and excellent surveillance detectors, to intercept and nullify everything from tape recorders to radar. It would seem hard to improve on this stuff, but Merritt Software, Inc., of Fayetteville, Arkansas, has gone and done it.

"Scramblers aren't enough anymore, you see. Mostly they work by simple 'spectrum inversion,' which is not real encryption at all, just a simple standard sound-muddling pattern. There are actually some weirdly gifted people who can speak scrambled speech, and it unscrambles perfectly through an unscrambler. The mind revolts from the notion, but it's true.

"So what Merritt Software sells is a variety of systems for totally encrypting speech into unbustable data constellations, which can only be decrypted between friendly machines using identical data keys. And Merritt goes even further than that. Because any time several people have the same 'secret' key, security logarithmically diminishes with each extra person admitted into the conspira—ah, the caper. But by using Merritt Software's Byzantine 'public' and 'private' key systems, the person in charge of the caper has total surveillance and recall, and hence control, over all communications within the system.

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craven paranoid into an unbeatable power freak *instantly*. And it all, naturally, fits neatly into the handsome stylized briefcase of your choice.

"Ted L. Gunderson and Associates of Los Angeles are mainly a bunch of ex-FBI spooks themselves, or so I hear, and it's their job to compete with the big multinationals like CCS. Gunderson and his merry men provide personal security consultations, on-site debugging sweeps, personnel security checks and all the other customary spook services, plus a whole line of spook-tech gear

"Of which my personal favorite is Gunderson's 'CEB 1000' briefcase. This comes with a little built-in transponder, which continuously signals to a remote receiver unit which you wear in your shirt pocket. If the briefcase moves more than fifteen feet from you—is nipped by the Bad Guys, that is—the remote unit starts vibrating silently, and you know it's been pinched. So you throw a little switch on another remote unit, and it signals the briefcase to deliver a two-thousand-volt shock to whomever has his hand on it. A shrieking alarm, plus the shrieks and groans of the thief, will guide you to your property."

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NO WING HIGH

"First of all, you gotta believe," the old guy said. He swore he could teach me how to fly, and staring at him across the last scotch of the evening I saw no reason to doubt him.

I was sitting on a barstool in the 8-Count, not particularly thinking about anything, like what I was doing there drinking the scotch and waters. Maybe it was because Marie was bitching at me because I wanted to take flying lessons. But she always had something to bitch about. Don't get me wrong, she was more or less a good soul, but the world was full of more or less good souls and look where we were: sitting on the last minute every minute. Well, you know all that. Anyhow, I was sitting next to this old guy who was wearing the orange turtleneck sweater and the walking shorts. Every now and then he glanced over at me and smiled slightly but I ignored it. I really didn't want to hear any barroom conversation. I mean, when you're sitting on your last minute every minute, it seems plausible to avoid the bullshit. Lake Time has value, right? Only the old guy couldn't bear it any longer. He finally spoke, and he spoke to me:

"You look like something is bothering you," he said.

"You're right," I answered.

"What is it?" he asked.

I looked at him. He was one of those guys with his eyes real close together. You felt like reaching out and spreading them further apart.

"I want to fly and I can't," I told him.

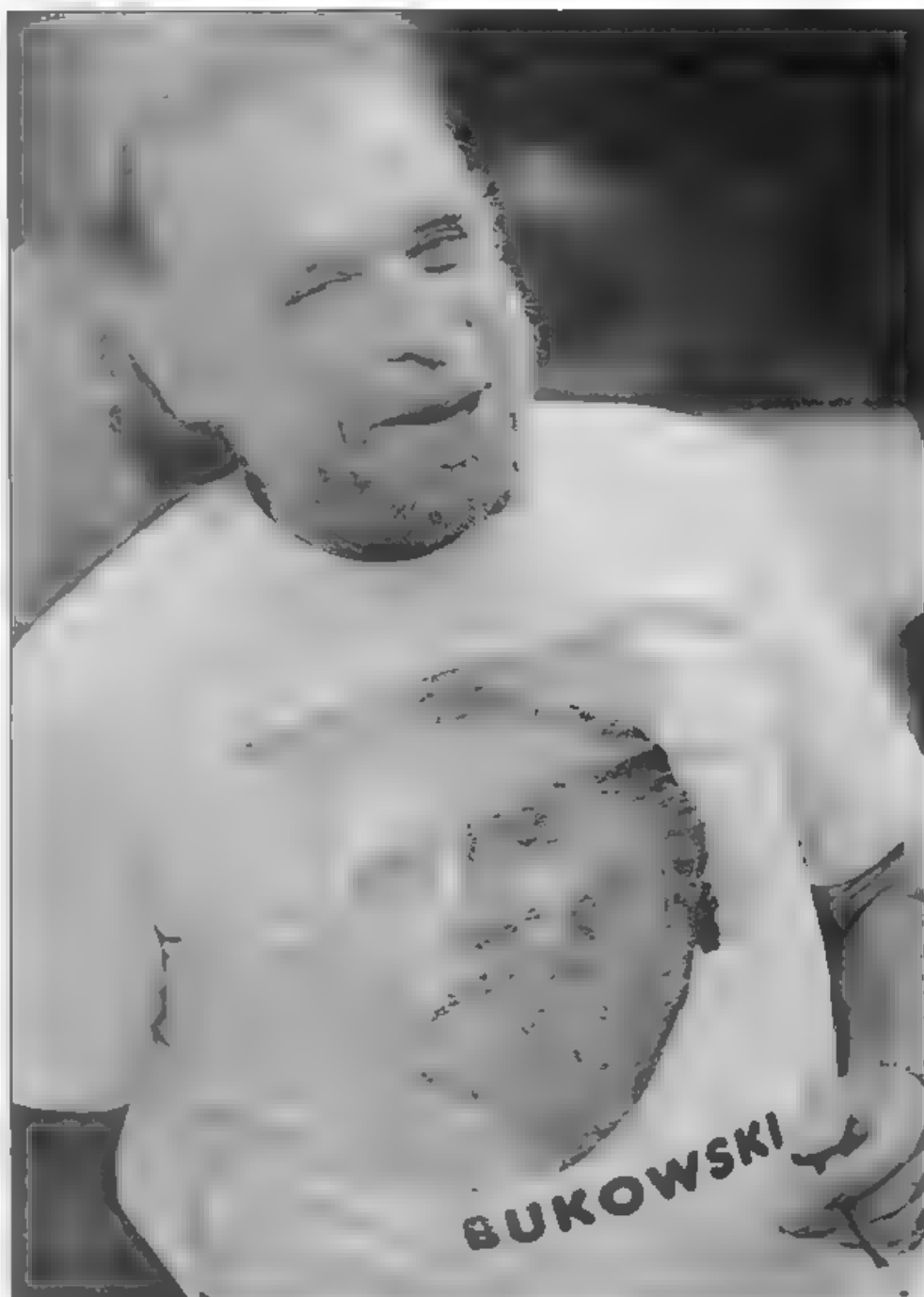
"Why not?"

"Why not? Because first I have to take lessons!"

"I can fly," the old guy said, "and I never took lessons."

I waved the bartender in for a new scotch and water for me and a beer for the old fellow. He was drinking draft beer. Maybe that's what made his eyes come so close together: green, cheap beer.

"Hard to believe you can fly and you



Michael Montfort

never took lessons," I said.

"I can tell you about it if you wanna listen," he suggested.

"I guess there's no other way?" I asked.

He smiled.

"Well," I said with some hesitation, "let's hear it."

There wasn't a woman in the bar, anyhow, and nothing on TV but the president smiling a little, having a slight head-twitch and trying to be a good sort, talking about something that had gone wrong but saying it was all right anyhow.

"It began," the old guy started in, "when I was about five years old. I was sitting in my bedroom one Saturday afternoon and the other children were off playing somewhere. And my parents were gone—"

"And you discovered your dickie?"

"Oh, no, that came much later. Please let me go on."

"Sure."

"I was just sitting there on my bed looking out the window and at the yard. My thoughts were inconsequential, hardly formed."

"You began early—"

"Yes, this is what I'm attempting to tell you. I was just sitting there and a fly landed upon my hand. My right hand—"

"Yeah?"

"Yes, it was a particularly nasty fly, fat, ignorant and extremely hostile. I waved my left hand to scare the fly away. It rose up an inch or two, buzzed about, and then with a really ugly sound it landed back upon my hand and bit me."

"Well, I'll be a son of a bitch!"

"Yes, sometimes... So, I brushed the fly away again and it rose about the room, circling and circling, making an angry and possessive sound. My hand stung badly. I had no idea that a fly bite could be that painful."

"Listen," I told the old guy, "I've got to go home. I've got a wife who puffs up like a frog and jumps all over me."

The old guy acted as if he hadn't heard.

"Anyhow, I hated that fly, its astonishing arrogance, its insect bestiality, its buzzing ignorance."

"You needed a flyswatter?"

"Anything at all to diminish it, to remove it. How I hated that fly! I felt that it had no right to act as it did. I wanted

to kill it because I felt, in essence, that it wanted to kill me."

"All is fair in love and flies."

"I watched the fly. I saw it settling on the ceiling, walking upside down. It felt so safe, and so superior to me. Looking at that upside-down body walking about, I became more and more angered. I had to kill that thing. In the deepest crevices of my soul I felt this terrible need to destroy that fly! My whole body began to tremble, then to vibrate, then I felt as if electricity were surging through me—then there was a flash of white!"

"That fly really got to you."

"And then I felt my body rising, rising! I rose up near the ceiling, my hand flashed out and I crushed that fly with my palm. I was surprised at my swiftness, at my act. And then I felt myself slowly settling down to the floor."

"Then what happened, old buddy?"

"I walked into the bathroom and washed my hands. Then I came out and sat on the bed."

"I guess the flies didn't mess with you anymore after that?"

"No, they didn't. But I sat there on the bed and I tried to fly again but I couldn't. I tried again and again but I couldn't."

"Maybe you needed a fly sting to ignite your rocket fuel?"

"I tried again and again to fly, I put all my effort into it but I couldn't do it. I felt that it had really happened, but then after a while I began to feel that perhaps I had imagined it, perhaps I had just gone crazy for the moment."

"How do you feel tonight, okay?"

"Oh, I'm fine, and I insist upon buying you another drink."

Another drink? I thought. He hadn't bought the first one. But maybe it was only a matter of semantics.

"All right," I said.

So the drinks arrived and we sat there, not talking, so I thought that particular bit of bullshit was over. I once met a guy in a bar who claimed that he ate his own flesh, so I pretty much accepted general chatter and pretty much dismissed it.

Then the old guy started again.

"Well, I pretty much forgot about the whole matter but then it came up again."

"Another fly bite you?"

"No, it was my senior year in high school. I was second-string left guard, it

was the last game of the season and I was in there because the guy who played ahead of me had gotten hurt. Now get this: We were playing our hated rivals, those rich cocksuckers from across town. I mean, those hot-dogs were despicable. Really. Beating them meant more to us than getting laid, and we never or seldom ever got laid because those guys were laying our girls because of their green background. Beating them on the field was the only way we could get back. We dreamed about it night and day. It was everything."

Well, I thought, now we've gone from hating flies to hating humans. They're both hard to take.

"It really came down to it," the old guy went on. "It was twenty-one to sixteen in favor of the richies, with thirty seconds left and they were on our twelve-yard line. They could have played it safe and just ground it out on the ground and let the clock run out but they wanted to rub it in. Not bad enough that they were despoiling our virgins, they wanted to score again against us."

"Too much."

"Yeah. So their quarterback goes back to pass—he's a real hunk of shit, drives a moss green Caddy—he spirals one up, it's tipped at the goal line by one of our defenders, it loops high into the air as the gun goes off. I'm back there because I've been pushed back on my ass and as I get up I see the ball coming down toward me and I grab it and start running around. I am totally surrounded by the richies. They begin to close in. There's nothing I can do. They are coming at me. All these guys who have been sticking their dicks into our helpless doves. I am in a freak, mindless fury. As they leap in to crush me in a mass tackle I feel myself suddenly rising! I am up in the air! I have the football and I am flying toward their goal line. I land in the end zone and we win the game!"

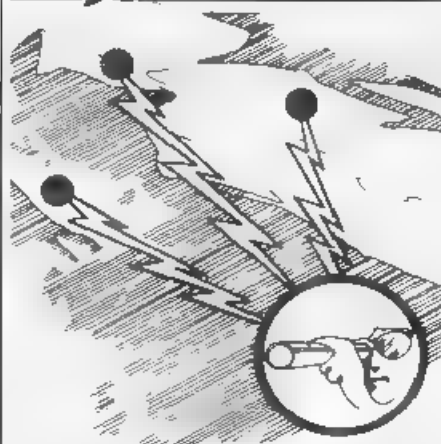
"I've got to say this," I told the old guy, "you've got the best line of shit I've ever heard!"

"It's no shit."

"Come on, now," I said, "I've never heard of this thing. Nobody has. It would have been in all the newspapers, it would have been heard all over the world!"

/ continued on next page

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/ continued from previous page

"It happened in a very small town. They put the lid on it. It was covered, drowned, paid off, buried forever."

"Nobody could cover a thing like that."

The old guy nodded toward a booth. We walked over and sat down. It was my turn on the drinks. I signaled the barkeep.

"Two more," I told him when he came over, "for both of us."

The old guy didn't speak until all four drinks arrived and the barkeep was back on the planks again.

"The government," he said, lifting one of those horrible green beers and draining almost all of it.

"Yeah?"

"They wanted the secret and I just didn't have it. It would've given them the most powerful army of all time. One almost invincible to the Bomb. They grilled me endlessly, but I just didn't know. Meanwhile, the whole incident at the football game had a lid put on it. I don't know what it did to the lives of the three- or four-hundred people who witnessed the act. My guess is that it's something they'll remember all the way to the grave."

I drained my first drink right off.

"You know, old man, you tell a convincing tale. I almost believe you."

"You don't have to," he responded. "It's just when you got into that thing about wanting to fly—I'd had a few drinks and it got me going."

"It's all right," I said, "I'd still like to fly."

"I can teach you," said the old guy. "I finally figured it."

"Now you know," I said, "I'm not going to buy that."

"No charge."

"Okay," I said, "teach me."

He looked at me across his green suds.

"First of all, you gotta believe."

"That's hard."

"Sometimes. Now, next, when you get ready to fly, you do this. Watch my hands. Do this."

"This?"

"Right. Now, inhale. And tend to roll your eyes into the back of your head. Then think of the worst thing that ever happened to you in your life."

"There are so many."

"I know, but pick the worst."

"Okay, I've got it."

"Now, say SOLZIMER. And you will rise."

"SOLZIMER," I said.

I sat there.

"Hey, old man, nothing is happening."

"It will. It just takes practice."

"Listen, old man, what's your name?"

"Benny."

"Well, Benny, I'm Hank. And I've got to say you've got the best line of bullshit I've heard in a long time. Either you're truly mad or you're the prime number-one joker of all time."

"Pleasure to know you, Hank. But I gotta go now. I'm a bus driver, I'm on my last year and have an 8:30 a.m. route. So it's late for me."

"Benny, I don't have a job but I'm going to finish my drinking at home, so I'll walk you out."

It was a fair enough night out there, full moon with a slight mist falling. The prostitutes were giving head in parked cars and in the alleys and my room was just around the corner. I had no idea where Benny lived. But as we neared the corner a big cop loomed up in the misty moonlight. That's all we needed and he needed us.

"You boys look blown out of your skulls on cheap booze. I think I'll take you both down to the tank to dry out. What do you think of that?"

"SOLZIMER," said Benny, and then he began to rise. He just floated up, right in front of the cop, kept rising—he went up over the Bank of America Building and then he just zoomed off.

"Holy shit!" the cop said, "did you see that?"

"SOLZIMER," I said.

Nothing happened.

"Listen," the big cop asked me, "weren't you with some guy?"

"SOLZIMER," I said.

"Okay," he said, "I saw this Solzimer just take off into space, didn't you?"

"I didn't see anything," I told him.

"All right," he said, "what's your name?"

"SOLZIMER," I said.

And then it began to happen. I felt myself rising, rising!

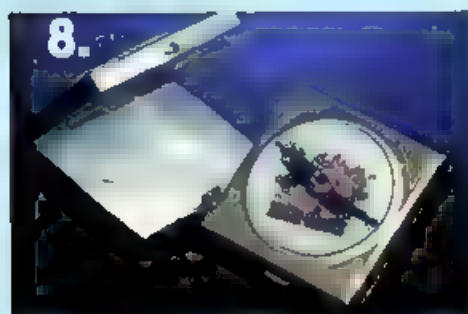
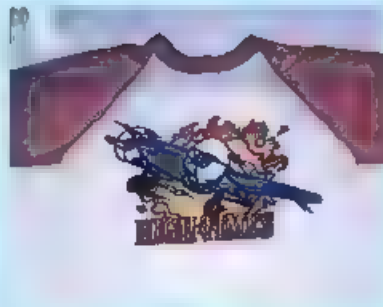
"Hey! Come back here!" the cop yelled.

I kept rising. It was great. I too rose over the Bank of America Building. The old man hadn't been lying to me. Even though his eyes had been too close together. It was a little cold up there. But I floated along. When I told the boys about the night of this drunk they'd never believe me. Too fucking bad. I made a left dip and swung over the Harbor Freeway to check out the action. It looked slow but I was still fairly pleased with life in general. □

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COLOMBIAN GOLD

BOOK BONUS

Excerpt II

A chance meeting on a deserted street turns into a cocaine-fueled orgy with the beautiful chief of Colombia's secret police. by Jaime Manrique

Santiago discovers cocaine and the "black" Mafia, Goajiros—the foes of Santiago and the rich drug dealers: the beginning of a war...

When the doorman offered to flag a taxi, Santiago didn't bother to answer; one thing he had learned from his father was that in Colombia there is no need to be polite to one's inferiors. He crossed the street and headed south toward the center of town. Noisy old buses clattered by, filled with passengers who hung from the doors and windows. It was a clear February night; the nearby mountains loomed in dark profile. In the park, stumpy Andean palms grew among ferns like prehistoric trees and the lustrous shivering eucalyptus leaves gleamed silver.

Santiago felt nauseated—it always took him a few weeks to get used to the change in altitude. As he walked he pondered his legacy—a barren, demented wife, the drug empire he shared with a father-in-law he despised and the torturous image of the father he had killed. He felt disoriented. His head was spinning. He straightened up. He didn't want people to think he was another drunk staggering through the streets.

Santiago was more familiar with Paris and New York than with Bogotá. He turned onto the Carrera Séptima, the spine of downtown. For someone who had lived abroad, entering Bogotá was like stepping into a time machine. Tall narrow buildings stood at attention like soldiers in the half-empty streets. Indian women, wrapped in heavy dark *ruanas*, lingered on corners, shielding scuzzy disheveled children from the cold. "Mal... boro, Mal... boro," they chanted.

Undernourished teenagers in rags hunched on the sidewalks like relics of the past, their eyes bloodshot from drugs and malnutrition. Dirty blankets were spread with trinkets for sale—leather goods, small color prints of the saints, posters of politicians and movie stars. Only a handful of passersby emerging from their office buildings and restaurants were well dressed; and they hailed cabs or quickly walked through the poorly lit streets to the avenue



The more he walked the dizzier he became. The fog billowed like smoke, burying his feet as he passed record shops blaring salsa and rock. Cripples leaned against cement-block walls, their hands and faces eaten away by leprosy sores. Smudge-faced barefoot children approached him for money. Although their clothes were tattered, they all wore ties. Older children, small as pygmies, carried infants and toddlers on their backs; their heads seemed to float above the fog. Santiago observed them with curiosity, offering them nothing.

Turning a corner, he saw the transvestites. Flamboyant in dress and manner, many of them more beautiful than the most beautiful women, they ambled along, throwing come-hither looks at older men in business suits.

The fog rolled down from the mountains, creeping forward like a regiment of silent spirits. A legless beggar, balanced on a sweeper's cart, wheeled to stop in front of Santiago. He offered the man a 20-peso coin. The beggar refused it, spat on his leg and pursued him through the mist. Santiago could barely see, but he could hear the screeching the cart made on the pitted, spit-splattered sidewalk. Santiago broke into a run and quickly outdistanced the awful noise. He felt he had stumbled into a

medieval culture. Gasping for breath he slowed to a walk. *Locos*, despite the cold, splashed naked in the fountain of the plaza. Haggard-faced policemen walked in pairs, stopping pedestrians to check their papers.

Farther on, Santiago passed a group of soldiers, as still as statues, clutching bayoneted rifles. He walked past dozens of policemen and soldiers without being stopped, his expensive clothes the key to their trust. A heavy war tank heading north on the Carrera Séptima broke through a charcoal cloud. On top of the tank a stone-faced soldier flashed a Thompson machine gun.

The cold grew bitter and the rumble of tanks grew louder. Small boys crouched in doorways and lay on the sidewalks, covered with newspapers and cardboard, piled one on top of another to keep warm. Beggars rifled garbage pails for food, and planted themselves in the paths of passersby, blocking their way and begging for *pan* and money.

In the few restaurants still open, men huddled over steaming cups of coffee as the fog took possession of the street. Santiago was tired and began looking for a cab, but realized he was in a part of town where taxis didn't come at that hour. He stood in the drizzle for 20 minutes. When a car finally pulled up, he got in, but the driver, on hearing the address, said he wouldn't be able to make it up the hill. Santiago got out, the taxi lurched away.

The rain fell frigid and biting.

Santiago was still waiting on the deserted street corner, feeling like a fool, when a pair of headlights emerged from the fog. A shiny black Mercedes braked to a stop a few yards from him. A familiar voice came from inside. "Santiago, what the fuck are you doing here?"

It was Mario Simán, whom he hadn't seen since New York. As Santiago pulled open a rear door, he felt something tug at his left arm, two small boys had snatched his watch, then leaped like deer into the night. A huge man jumped out of Mario's car and fired a revolver in the boys' direction.

"Skip it," Mario ordered. "Let's go."

The chauffeur put the car in gear, ignoring the red light at the intersection. In the backseat, next to Mario, sat a

young woman.

"Caridad," Mario said, "I'd like you to meet Santiago Villalba. I've been hoping to get you two together for a while now, but I never expected it to be here."

Caridad smiled, her teeth were a necklace of small pearls. "Pleased to meet you," she said. "Mario has told me a lot about you." Auburn curls fell to her shoulders. Her skin was glossy and flushed, her jade eyes were ringed by long, abundant lashes and her features were delicate.

The car raced through the mist twisting up the mountain. The driver parked in front of a metal sentry box that housed an armed guard. Caridad and Mario led Santiago to a high red-brick wall. Immense ferns hid a wooden door. Mario pressed a button, a sharp buzz rang out and he pushed the door open. Bending down to avoid the low branches, they climbed a stone path. On the left, pre-Columbian statues stood in terraced gardens; on the right, half a dozen brightly colored pheasants and a bird of paradise slept in a bronze cage.

The rain had stopped; and the mountain slopes were free of the fog that enveloped the city below. Santiago was completely sober but still shaken. The moon shone silver over the mountains. It looked like a Ping-Pong ball. They climbed steps flanked by white and pink orchids and arrived at the front door. A sleepy young maid opened it and took their coats. She led them through hallways decorated with luminous paintings of the savannah to a small room. Inside, on a black Formica table, stood small pre-Columbian sculptures. Four enormous Chibchan urns, silent guards, flanked a glassed-in garden. The walls of the living room were covered with black wool. Hanging on them was Mario's collection of pre-Columbian gold.

Santiago and Caridad sat down, and Mario knelt at the fireplace. The maid returned with a liquor caddy, then left, dragging her feet with fatigue.

As Mario lit a fire, Santiago studied Caridad. She couldn't have been more than 25, yet there was something older about her. She was slender, with a small waist and long legs, and wore black leather pants, spike heels and a lavender silk blouse open at the neck, revealing ivory breasts. She was covered in gold. At her neck hung a layered collar of polished reddish *tumá* stones with miniature gold turtles, frogs, a Tairona nose pendant and a coral clasp. Around her right arm, halfway between wrist and elbow, curled a gold bracelet in the

shape of a snake, with emeralds for eyes. Her sharp black-painted fingernails were set off by Calima rings. Santiago thought he detected something cruel and harsh in her demeanor.

Santiago lay back on the sofa and stroked its fur cushions. He felt oddly excited by what the evening might bring.

The logs caught fire, flames leaped up and Mario turned to Santiago. "What the hell were you doing in the streets? Didn't you see the cops crawling all over the place? You know there's a curfew."

"It was still early when I left the hotel," he answered, a little embarrassed. "The weather was nice and I wanted to take a walk and look around. The truth is that I don't know Bogotá very well."

"We could see that," Caridad said sarcastically, taking off her shoes and curling up like a cat in the armchair. Her feet were small, white and perfect.

"Wise up. Bogotá ain't New York. You're in Colombia." Mario began mixing drinks.

"Caca-lombia," corrected Caridad with a teasing smile.

"And she should know," Mario said. "She's chief of PAX, the Colombian secret police."

"Really?" asked Santiago.

Caridad smiled.

Mario set vodka martinis in front of his friends.

Caridad sipped her drink. "I'm not a bit hungry. Let's have some fun. Santiago must be used to a more interesting kind of nightlife. This place is the pits—if it weren't for the opera and the embassy parties, I'd die of boredom." She stood up and walked toward the record player. "Can I play Tito Puente?" she asked Mario.

"Why not?" Mario walked to a room at the end of the hall and returned a minute later holding a small gold box.

Caridad gave a sigh of relief.

Mario glanced at Santiago. "Want to powder your nose?"

He nodded, although it had been a long time since he had used cocaine. Using a delicate gold spoon, Mario poured the white powder from the box onto a large disc of Quimbaya gold. Caridad and Santiago watched him separate the cocaine into portions with a knife. When Mario had made a dozen long thin rows, he took a new bill, rolled it into a straw and put one end to the gold disc and the other to his right nostril. He inhaled deeply. "Umm... fabulous," he hummed.

Santiago took his turn last. He felt nothing at first, but the third line gave his head a cool, electric rush. He snorted one more line, closed his eyes and

for an instant thought he could see his own brain floating in space, the blood vessels filled with liquid, platinum cocaine.

When he opened his eyes he saw Caridad and Mario sprinkling cocaine on the tips of their tongues. He did the same, and as his tongue, his lips and the roof of his mouth went numb, he suddenly felt better than he had for months. The flames in the fireplace, the shimmering gold, the rain outside and the tropical music all seemed to whirl inside his head.

Caridad stood up to dance, oblivious of the two men. Hips swaying, she lost herself in the rhythm of the song. Mario stood up and took her in his arms. Santiago felt his own erection as he watched the couple kiss passionately. Soon they stopped dancing and, with arms around each other's waists, left the room.

A dizzying chill shook Santiago's body. He turned the record over and poured himself a straight vodka. As he sipped it tears came to his eyes, another drink and two more lines of cocaine soothed him. He walked around the room, caressed the ancient objects with the tips of his fingers, picked up a grotesque gold mask and placed it on his face. Transported, he took off his clothes and put on breast and shoulder ornaments, arm bands, golden anklets, leg pieces, a nose plug and a feather crown and cape. Raising a golden rattle and scepter over his head, he looked at his reflection in the window and said aloud, "I am El Dorado."

Laughing insanely to himself, he set off in search of his friends and found himself in the kitchen. A guard listening to the radio and drinking *aguardiente* gave Santiago a bewildered look, exclaimed, "Ave María!" and crossed himself. A Doberman threw itself against the iron gate on the patio, barking hoarsely and baring its sharp fangs.

Santiago hurried back to the living room, then went up the stairs, opening door after door until he found a bedroom where candlelight and rock music ricocheted off the walls. Mario and Caridad were naked on a round bed.

In the dark he stepped on an object and stumbled.

"Watch out for my leg!" Mario shouted.

Santiago stood next to the bed and stared down at them.

Caridad laughed and held out her arms. "Come to me, my golden man."

She removed the gold, piece by piece. Santiago dropped the feather cape on the floor, took off his mask and

smiled as he got into bed. Watching the reflection of their bodies in the smoky glass ceiling, Santiago felt a warm moist tongue draw back his foreskin.

The next afternoon Mario and Santiago and two bodyguards left for Santa Marta in Mario's private plane. It was a short trip—barely 40 minutes before the plane touched down at a small airport near the ocean. A waiting car drove them to El Rodadero. The immense burning sun was hanging low in the horizon when the car dropped them near the narrow wooden pier where Mario's boat, a pure white yacht, was anchored. Its flag displayed a Chibcha mask.

The two friends sat down on deck chairs to drink martinis. The tide was coming in and dark waves lapped the shore. Flocks of pelicans and sea ravens were flying toward their nesting islands. The ship began to move, the wind was bittersweet.

The yacht moored at a wharf of barnacle-covered timbers. The island was a gigantic ocher-colored rock whose only vegetation was cacti. On top of it stood an enormous glass building. Thousands of iridescent minnows darted here and there as Mario and Santiago clambered onto a stone terrace and climbed half a dozen narrow steps to a glass elevator; it rose slowly.

They stepped off. The atrium was vast, with bridges crossing brooks full of algae, fish, crabs and snails. Mario was obviously pleased to be able to show his house off and gave Santiago the tour. Black marble staircases led from one level to another. Ferns hung from the ceilings and grew voluptuously throughout. On the second floor, in the center of an empty room, was a gold cage big enough to hold condors. Inside it were rocks, trees, fountains and birds of rainbow plumage. To Santiago, the house suggested a primitive shrine.

Mario led Santiago out onto the terrace for more cocktails. The horizon was a long, thin, fiery coil. Salmon rivulets rippled on the serene Caribbean surface.

Around nine a helicopter emerged from the darkness and landed on one of the lower terraces. Mario had ordered dinner to be brought in from Martinique. Two lean young waiters dressed in red guayaberas served them langoustine and Dom Perignon, and Santiago half listened as Mario talked about his latest pre-Columbian finds. Then Mario took Santiago to the observatory.

A gold tray heaped with cocaine was waiting for them. Santiago couldn't hide his surprise—he had never imag-

ined using the drug in such large quantities. "Couldn't we smoke pot instead?"

Mario frowned. "Smoke is for peasants, man. Chill out. This is what they have for breakfast in Hollywood—champagne and cocaine. How do you think the Incas built Machu Picchu? They weren't eating potatoes." He laughed and began to cut the cocaine into lines. "Colombia's not so bad... if daddy's president."

"This kind of wealth—" Santiago began.

"Being president here is no big deal," Mario interrupted. "This isn't a country—it's a big farm with a few conveniences. In a real country, if you get bored in the afternoon you can go to a museum that has Picasso at least."

Santiago sipped his vodka, dragged on his cigarette and said nothing. Mario inhaled more cocaine, then stared into his friend's eyes. "Santiago, don't be such a gringo bore. This place is like ancient Egypt; we're the pharaohs and those dumbfuck peasants do the building for us. Don't forget, you're a bastard, you know. It wasn't that long ago that bastards were untouchables." His mood suddenly changed. "Do you know how I lost my leg?" he asked.

Santiago knew the story but didn't interrupt.

"My father was minister of foreign affairs, right? But he made me take the bus to school. Some democratic idea of his. Well, one day I missed the bus and papa had the chauffeur take me in the limo. As soon as he turned on the ignition, the car blew up. The driver went through the windshield and flew fifty feet before he died. I was lucky. I only lost my leg." Mario sipped his vodka.

Santiago murmured, "I'm sorry."

"Do you know the stories they tell about me?" Mario asked, as if he hadn't heard. "They say I killed hundreds of people until I found the perfect leg to graft. You know, they even say I have crematoriums in this place." He smiled painfully and ran his hand over his face and through the curls of his hair. "That's why, when I deal with people, I remember what they know—or think they know—about me. I'm lucky to be the president's son. You're lucky to be so rich."

Santiago started. "I'm not that rich."

Mario blinked his eyes in disbelief. "Santiago, do you see these islands?" he asked, drawing a semicircle to indicate the expanse of the bay. "Half of them belonged to your old man. Now they belong to you. Haven't you ever looked at your inheritance papers?"

Santiago stared into the open dark-

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ness. The cocaine seemed to have emptied his head. "I guess there is a lot Antonio hasn't told me." The sound of his own voice surprised him more than Mario's news.

"Antonio is a puritan with a cross up his ass. He belongs to that same old Spanish aristocracy that your father did. Once in a while they may be extravagant, buy a Zurbarán, a house in Mayfair or even a Gothic cathedral; but deep down they're really cheapskates. Antonio comes from money and likes to live the good life, but he doesn't blow his cash unless he gets something back. You know what they say about an idle mind being the devil's playground." Mario paused.

Santiago pretended not to understand. "You mean the drug business?"

"You got the picture," Mario said ironically. "Hang around Santa Marta for a few days, I'll really open your eyes."

They had consumed most of the cocaine when the clock on the wall struck three. A circular, grotesquely enlarged moon lit the landscape with its milky light. From the terrace they saw schools of dolphins breaking the mirror of the sea.

Mario's voice caught Santiago's attention. "We're much too coked up to sleep. How about going fishing?" he asked, standing up. Strangely, fishing seemed at that moment the most interesting idea in the world.

They fished until dawn, when the stars dropped out of the sky and sank in the horizon. The sun rose. Lifting anchor, they turned back, followed by a school of sharks. Mario took out an automatic rifle and began shooting until several sharks bled, the others, crazed by the scent, began to devour them, turning the water bloody with intestines, fins and jawbones.

Santiago woke up hours later in the glass house with clotted blood blocking his nostrils and drenching his pillow. As he staggered to the bathroom, the sun was setting behind Mario Simán's island.

It was in the coastal town of Santa Marta that Simón Bolívar died cursing Colombia; he had liberated the country from the Spanish and it had repaid him by throwing him in prison. And, over a century later, it was in Alvaro Villalba's Santa Marta office that Santiago had been received on his yearly visits. The town hadn't been much more than a hamlet then, with one main street running the length of the bay and only a few motels, all of them built at the beginning of the century, facing the water.

But by the early 1960s, sewage and seafaring traffic had left Santa Marta's bay a pool of thick oil, and entrepreneurs had moved north to the town of El Rodadero, which quickly became a high-rise-cluttered vacation resort.

The major drug traffickers of the area had begun operating out of El Rodadero. At midnight, every night, the waters of the bay would light up with the beacons of arriving boats. Caravans of trucks would meet them, and strong bronzed men would appear and load the drugs onto the boats. Then the lights would vanish, bound for Cuba and ports on the East Coast of the United States.

Santiago moved into the Fernández condominium on the beach. The El Rodadero tourist season was coming to a close and the population had begun to thin out. Only those few proprietors who lived in the town year-round were keeping their stores and shops open. A half-dozen Hell's Angels, their bodies as tanned as baked hams, spent the days playing ball on the beach; their slender girlfriends, followed by attack dogs, walked through the sand in spike heels and tiny bikinis. Several older couples still lounged in the sun, and local youngsters lolled around smoking Santa Marta Gold and Sierra hash.

Mario explained that this scenic part of the country lived in terror of vendettas. Two factions of the Mafia were at work and at war "The 'white Mafia'" said Mario, "is you and me and people like us. And the 'black Mafia' it's those ugly Goajiro monkeys hornung in on the marijuana trade." The Goajiros were known to finance subversives, and it was from Cuban ports that, with the blessing of Fidel Castro, their drug shipments were smuggled into the States. Feuds between Goajiro factions were extraordinarily savage.

One afternoon in Santa Marta, Santiago saw the Goajiros in action. He was skimming a magazine at a café when a jeep screeched to a halt. Two short, shiny Goajiros in skin-tight emerald green and scarlet jumpsuits got out, raced through the restaurant brandishing Magnum revolvers and opened fire on a young man who sat drinking a few feet from Santiago. The shower of bullets was short and noisy; no one moved or spoke until the jeep tore away. Santiago left hurriedly before the police arrived.

Upset, he told Mario that he wanted to return to Bogotá. "Oh, man, please. If you can't handle a little street action, go back to New England. Besides, I promised Antonio I'd take you to the farm." □



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A Monthly Report on Drugs and the Law

Written in consultation with Kevin Zeese, NORML Chief Counsel

URINALYSIS: TAKING ON THE BRASS

Well-defended G.I.'s can dispute pot urine tests, and win. by Bob LaBrasca

FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

THE MARIJUANA URINALYSIS PROGRAM may be a spectacularly costly boondoggle for the Department of Defense (see article, page 19), but it's also providing a business boom for a number of law firms specializing in the defense of military cases. Hutchins and Waple in Fayetteville, North Carolina, is one of those firms; they now have more than 50 active army urinalysis cases at Fort Bragg, and have won the first clear victories against this wholesale violation of G.I. rights.

In the first two weeks of October, nine of their clients, who had refused to accept nonjudicial punishments following marijuana-positive urinalyses, and had demanded trials by court-martial, won dismissals "with prejudice" (meaning their cases are dismissed permanently and cannot be reintroduced). Had government prosecutors sought dismissals *without* prejudice, they would have been required to explain extensively why they were taking such action. That they did not do so implies to most informed observers that the military still has much to hide about the questionable validity of their urinetesting procedures—more even than Mark Waple and his associates have already discovered in defending these cases.

In preparation for trial, Waple's defense team interviewed everyone involved in the chain of custody of the Fort Bragg urine samples: from the initial gathering of these samples through the entire testing procedure at Fort Meade. What they learned, in formal depositions and informal conversations with clerks, lab technicians and administrators at the testing facility was downright appalling. Some urine samples, they found, had been lost outright; some had changed from "negative" to "positive" from one stage of testing to the next, with no explanation offered; and the whereabouts of some batches of samples was simply not known. In short, says Mark Waple, "It was a total-

ly defective chain of custody."

But even more important for his clients and thousands—perhaps tens of thousands—of other service personnel, the standards for the testing procedures themselves were haywire. All of Waple's clients initially had been tested with the Roche radio-immunoassay system, trademarked "Abuscreen-THC" (RIA), which, like the EMIT system from Syva, Inc., has no forensic value in itself. Their positive samples were then "confirmed" by means of a gas chromatograph, flame-ionization process, known in the DOD as the Manders-Whiting procedure. But, Waple soon learned, the Manders-Whiting approach, though different from RIA, has barely any additional validity as *proof* that anyone has ever smoked pot.

With the resultant questionable data in hand, the brass had then offered Waple's clients nonjudicial punishments for their "crimes." Only after the accused had insisted that they were not marijuana smokers and had refused these summary punishments (Article 15s)—already meted out to thousands of their comrades in arms—did the government resort to mass-spectrometric analysis of their samples. And gas chromatography with mass spectrometry is the *only* recognized, forensically reliable means of identifying marijuana metabolites.

"Why is it that a soldier has to turn down an Article 15 in order to get a GC-mass spec?" Waple asks. "The problem is they don't tell that to the soldier when they offer him the nonjudicial punishment. In fact, they don't even have the doggone test results in front of him. They're getting a verbal communication from somewhere saying that Sergeant Jones is positive for marijuana. The commander immediately calls Sergeant Jones in and offers him an Article 15. And Jones is scared to death, because it takes some courage to turn down an Article 15 in the service."

Waple's nine clients had that courage though, and it has served them well. It may even help many of the thousands who have already accepted cuts in pay

and rank, loss of flight status, shortened military careers, etc., etc.—since it now appears that at least a large proportion of those service personnel who accepted nonjudicial punishment did so under intimidation fueled by seemingly irrefutable, but highly flawed, scientific data.

Meanwhile, Waple has had another significant case in the works, a class action, filed May 31, 1983, on behalf of 31 other soldiers from Fort Bragg. The class action seeks to stop the entire urinetesting program on the grounds that it is scientifically dubious, and violates not only the G.I.'s rights to due process but the army's own regulations as well. That suit was dismissed in July in accordance with the government's claim that administrative remedies had not been exhausted, but Waple has filed a motion for reconsideration of the dismissal, and that motion is still pending as we go to press.

The nine individual cases and the class action, together, have clarified the necessity for genuinely reliable, scientifically authoritative testing procedures, if military personnel are ever to enjoy anything like due process; but, in a sense, the real issues still have not been confronted. In the interest of justice, the courts must eventually decide two things: first, whether the presence of a metabolite of marijuana in a soldier's bloodstream can, in fact, *prove* previous intoxication, and second, whether off-duty marijuana intoxication implies any impairment at all of a soldier's ability to perform when he returns to duty. The *Murray v. Haldeman* decision of July 25, 1983, by the Military Court of Appeals, asserts rather firmly that, to discipline service people on the basis of positive urinalyses, the government must first demonstrate duty-impairing "physiological or psychological effects" and a connection between those effects and the marijuana metabolite.

In the end, if reason prevails, this ought to be downright impossible. It's like having to prove that a beer on Sunday caused a traffic accident on the following Thursday. □

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DEA STING

/ continued from page 59

with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Vara Scientific offers no pure alcohol, being much more scientific. They do, along with USA, offer ergotamine tartrate (a major no-no with the Food and Drug Administration), but at a much more realistic purchase price. Vara charges \$100 for 500 milliliters of ergotamine, whereas USA's price for the same amount is only \$25. When I asked Agent Schabillion in Westmount to account for this ridiculous disproportion, he speculated that Vara might have a "premium" on ergotamine because it has to be kept refrigerated. And there just happened, he advised me helpfully, to be some ergotamine tartrate in USA's own icebox that day: "We ordered a shipment last month for a customer." And got it straight back after they convicted the poor bastard, no doubt.

Both these catalogs, in their respective ways, are pretty enough to set any natural-born organic chemist's mouth to watering, even if he knows it's not real, and never could be in a hundred years. Chemists are ordinarily remorselessly rational, but there's something magic in just the names of these dope chemicals that fetches their poor brains galley-west.

"Of course this catalog's a sting!" my pal Hamadryad exclaimed contemptuously after the briefest riffle through the USA production. "Look at where they're offering ergotamine tartrate, incredible. They're selling ergotamine tartrate! So you look back toward the front for cyclohexanone, and that's there too. Then you flip way in the back: *triethylamine*! Well, at least it's misspelled—triathylamine—obviously on purpose. God knows why. But that's so blatant! Ergotamine, cyclohexanone, triethylamine: put them all together they spell LSD-25. Anyone who knows anything about drug law would run a mile from this catalog." My pal Hamadryad became an expert on drug law whilst defending himself on a dope-making rap in 1973; he became even more expert before they let him out of Danbury Federal Prison, which has splendid legal and scientific research resources.

Hamadryad spent a good deal longer with the Vara catalog, and became so intensely interested, it was touching to behold, and also a little scary. "I don't know about this one," he kept saying. "I just don't know!" And as he pored over it, that old black magic of illicit alchemy

lit up his eye so evilly, I probably could have garnered a tidy snitch fee for myself just by dialing up the DEA and reporting the expression on his face.

"They've got ergotamine tartrate listed, which is preposterous, of course," he reasoned raptly. "But if they're not cops, somehow, you can always fake them out with phony license forms. They have cyclohexanone too, but that's not too suspicious, it's fairly commonplace in drug research. The thing is, they *aren't* offering triethylamine, which would be a dead giveaway. But they *are* listing diethylamine and diethyl ether, right together here in alphabetical order: react them just right and you can probably get triethylamine. Then you react that with the ergotamine and the cyclohexanone. . . I don't know. I just don't know," he exclaimed with an awful urgency.

To preserve Hamadryad from further anguish—and further federal time, no doubt, if he kept on *thinking* that way—I gently interposed the sorrowful reality. "Here," I told him, shifting both catalogs side by side on his ether-corroded workbench. "Read aloud this paragraph on the second page of the Vara catalog, while I read aloud this paragraph on the fifth page of the USA catalog." And we commenced to chant, in perfect unison, like a doxology in church: "TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. At the buyer's request, we will furnish technical assistance and information with respect to compounding or manufacturing techniques or processes usable in connection with the goods covered by this document. Unless otherwise agreed, all such technical assistance and information will be provided gratis. . ." And we went on for about 50 more words, all exactly in unison, to the final stinger line: "Call for information on this service."

When the horse-laughing subsided, we made much mock of these two "companies," separated by a thousand miles, having the same lawyer, with the same telltale, clubfooted legal prosody as the DEA's own civil-service attorney, Wilham Lenck. "This document. . ." . . . provided gratis. . ." It reads exactly like one of Lenck's awful, clubfooted explanations of his DEA Model Drug Paraphernalia Act.

"At least they'll only sting in people who've never done business with real chemical firms before," Hamadryad assured me. "Free technical advice from a chemical firm? Forget about it, they'd go broke."

The quality of their technical assistance, though, has to be something pretty special. In Brooklyn Federal

Court this past February, a United States attorney named Victor Stolz succeeded in winning a conviction against a young man for the unprecedented felony of conspiracy to manufacture cocaine. The defendant had indicated to the Apex Publishing Company of Times Square Station that he was interested in literature pertaining to the synthesis of cocaine: not extracting it from coca leaves, but building each molecule up synthetically, from scratch. This can in fact be done, on paper, but the problem is that the process is so incredibly expensive that it would never be cost-efficient, even at current coke prices; but the defendant here didn't know that, although of course he did know a little more than most college English Lit. majors about organic chemistry.

So the defendant wrote to Apex Publishing, having seen their ad in a popular magazine's classified section. Forthwith, he was in receipt of a catalog from Vara Scientific of Newark, listing all these pornographic chemicals and urging him to call for technical assistance. DEA special agent "Ann Hauptman" (*not her real name*) logged his call on her recorded line, and referred him to her superior, "Mr. Conti"—Special Agent Joseph Vigna, who was running Vara as part of the DEA's "Operation Optimal." Vigna put the defendant in touch with S/A Lester Williams, a chemistry whiz who quickly showed the defendant that synth-o-coke, while endlessly interesting, is plain impracticable; and S/A Williams then literally nagged and bullied this kid into a conspiracy to manufacture methaqualone.

"Even his parole officer has to admit it," this convicted felon's mother tells me in a beautiful Brooklyn accent: "He can't find anybody in the neighborhood with a bad word to say about my son. He's a good boy! I mean, I know I'm his mother talking, but he *is* good. If he really had been involved with drugs—selling drugs, taking drugs, either way—then I know I would be really angry and upset with him, but I'm not. He's not bad, not a criminal. I know the law says he's done something wrong, and he has to pay for it, and maybe that's true. But I just don't know."

Remember that her son will never be able to vote, or stand jury duty, or hold elective office, or a sensitive government or corporate position, the rest of his life: he got convicted of conspiracy to manufacture methaqualone *and* cocaine. Nobody gets convicted of making cocaine, but this kid was convicted—and did extra federal prison time,

/ continued on page 95

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1001 THOUGHTS ABOUT DRUGS

THIRTY-NINTH OF A MONTHLY SERIES

503 TOBACCO BUSINESS THE MAJOR THREAT, UN OFFICIAL ARGUES
Winnipeg—Pressure from international business conglomerates forced the World Health Organization to suppress the report of a commissioned economic study on alcohol earlier this year for reasons of "political expediency," a Canadian who works for the United Nations in Geneva says.

Frederick Clairmonte told the fifth World Conference on Smoking and Health that the "increasing totalitarianism" of international corporations is becoming more conspicuous.

"When you talk tobacco, you are talking politics—cancer is an offshoot—you are talking power," Mr. Clairmonte, a senior economic affairs officer with the UN Conference on Trade and Development, said.

"In fact, tobacco companies as independent organizations have not existed for years. Now they are closely interlinked with one another and with alcohol, food, shipping and oil interests."

Mr. Clairmonte said the WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations itself "are not impervious" to the power of the conglomerates.

He said that tobacco and alcohol interests have worked to suppress research "which they consider anathema to their interests," such as his work on the study.

Later, he said that suppression of the economic report this year effectively "castrated" probing economic studies. He predicted that attempts to combat smoking and drinking will go back to nineteenth-century temperance appeals that offer no threat to the economic power structure.

Mr. Clairmonte told the conference that between 1960 and 1980, transnational corporations had increased their share of the world's gross domestic product (excluding socialist countries) from 18 per cent to 30 per cent.

Conspicuous among the powerful conglomerates are the "seven smoking sisters," which include the British American Tobacco Co., Imperial Tobacco Co., R.J. Reynolds, Philip Morris, and Rothman/Rembrandt.

In the four years since the last world smoking and health conference, the tobacco companies have diversified and strengthened their links with other interests, particularly alcohol producers.

"You are looking at one addictive commodity being married to another addictive

commodity," he said. Mr. Clairmonte said that in the past four years in the United States, the anti-trust structure "is being dismantled by the Reagan Administration."

Mr. Clairmonte said that an estimated \$7-billion goes into the advertising worldwide of tobacco and alcohol. He said the power of the international conglomerates gives them an increasing capacity to blackmail countries large and small and not only those in the developing world.

"We talk sentimentally about the dangers of cancer without talking about the power of capital and the dangers it represents," he said.

Joan Hollobon, *Toronto Globe & Mail*, July 14, 1983

504 DRUNKEN DRIVING, MAIN KILLER IN MILITARY, WEINBERGER SAYS
Washington, March 11 (AP)—The Pentagon has reported to Congress that drunken driving "is the leading cause of death in the military" and that Defense Secretary Casper W. Weinberger had ordered a major effort to fight the problem.

The problem was mentioned briefly in a report on manpower that was given to Congress this week. It said Mr. Weinberger had ordered that all military and civilian personnel convicted for drunken driving be barred for a year from operating vehicles on military installations.

"The Secretary also directed each military department to conduct an intensive, sustained, public education campaign against drunk driving," the report said.

In a memorandum dated last Nov. 26 Mr. Weinberger told the Secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force that in the previous year nearly 500 members of the armed forces had died as a result of drunken driving.

New York Times,
Mar. 13, 1983

505 NO SNIFFS
Over at McDonald's, you get no kick from cocaine. At least not in the future. At a cost of over \$1 million, the all American, fast-food chain is changing the design of its plastic coffee stirrers, because they're being used to sniff cocaine and inhale PCP. "It has been brought to our attention," explains a burger spokesman, "that people are using them illegally and illicitly for purposes for which they are not intended." Use of the handy stirrer—a long handle

with a tiny spoon bowl—came to light at a recent Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing into legislation banning sales of narcotics paraphernalia. Manufacturers and head shop owners, opposing the ban, pointed to the availability and popularity of McDonald's spoons.

New York Post,
Dec. 10, 1979

506 STONED' CROWS SMASH PANES
Traunstein, West Germany (UPI)—Drug-crazed crows, "high" on window putty, are terrorizing a new suburb by smashing window panes with their beaks, city council officials say.

A council spokesman said the crows gorged themselves on window putty pecked from newly installed panes and then went on a rampage of window smashing. Experts said the putty probably contained chemicals that made the birds hyperactive and aggressive.

Toronto Star, July 28, 1983

507 LAST YEAR WHEN THE SUPPLY OF Mexican marijuana was slightly curtailed by the Feds, the pushers got the kids hooked on heroin and deaths increased dramatically, particularly in New York. Whose fault? Evil men like the Mafiosi? Permissive Dr. Spock? Wild-eyed Dr. Leary? No.

The Government of the United States was responsible for those deaths. The bureaucratic machine has a vested interest in playing cops and robbers. Both the Bureau of Narcotics and the Mafia want strong laws against the sale and use of drugs because if drugs are sold at cost there would be no money in it for anyone.

If there was no money in it for the Mafia, there would be no friendly playground pushers, and addicts would not commit crimes to pay for the next fix. Finally, if there was no money in it, the Bureau of Narcotics would wither away, something they are not about to do without a struggle.

Will anything sensible be done? Of course not. The American people are as devoted to the idea of sin and its punishment as they are to making money—and fighting drugs is nearly as big a business as pushing them. Since the combination of sin and money is irresistible (particularly to the professional politician), the situation will only grow worse.

Gore Vidal, *New York Times*,
Sept. 26, 1970

HIGH TIMES welcomes reader contributions to this clever column. Address correspondence to: Dope Lore, HIGH TIMES, 17 West 60th Street, New York, NY 10023.

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HE BELIEVES IN HIS SOUL

Dexys' Kevin Rowland combines Memphis horns and Irish fiddles with an unshakable conviction in the power of music to inspire. Judging from *Billboard's* Hot 100, it's a winning combination.

by Larry Sloman and George Barkin

After being captivated by the "Come on, Eileen" video on MTV, we at HIGH TIMES fell over ourselves to interview Dexys' Kevin Rowland. We caught up with Kevin and his musical/personal adviser violinist, Helen O'Hara, one afternoon at the Polygram Record offices in New York. Despite the flamboyant stage apparel, Kevin turned out to be a shy, introspective, somewhat taciturn little booger. But after a while, he opened up and gave us a glimpse of the man inside the pants with the inside-out pockets. . .

HIGH TIMES: You had a number-one song in the United States with "Come on Eileen," largely due to your great video. How much of a role did you have in putting it together?

KEVIN ROWLAND: All of it

Well, we have a director. But he just held the camera for us.

HIGH TIMES: When you are writing, do you try to come up with stuff you think will play good on video?

ROWLAND: No. It's great fun though. It's all part of the process, the creative process, if you like, as I see it. Like doing a record sleeve or something.

HIGH TIMES: Who were the musicians you were listening to when you were growing up?

ROWLAND: Definitely rhythm-oriented music, soul music. Stax and Atlantic in the late '60s, and then again, around '78, they were playing that stuff once more. Reggae, in '68, '69, was very popular in London, very big underground thing—very, very popular. It was before it was called reggae. Then, in the early '70s, funk, a lot of funk, also Roxy Music.

HIGH TIMES: Dexys has gone through, your latest press release

notwithstanding, a bunch of changes. The first album was pretty much just R&B, funk, I don't know, and the synthesis in this one is the combining of the two genres, the kind of traditional music and the folk, soul or something. It takes a leap of imagination to come up with that.

ROWLAND: I originally had the idea in 1980 to do something with fiddles, violins, stringed instruments. At the time the first group was still around—

HIGH TIMES: When did that Young Soul Rebels album come out?

ROWLAND: Summer, '80. Just after Young Soul Rebels came out, which we were really pleased with, me and the guitarist in the group started talking about using fiddles and stuff. I mentioned it to some of the rest of the group. They didn't like the idea, so we just started experimenting. We never lost the idea, you know. We never dropped the idea, and I experimented quite a lot during '81, with different stringed instruments, like cellos and stuff, trying to get the right sound. It wasn't just like a miraculous achievement, it was a lot of shit, you know, it was never going to be any good—and then meeting Helen was like a breakthrough.

HIGH TIMES: You met her on a corner or something?

ROWLAND: A bus stop. I thought everybody knew that. The legendary bus-stop meeting.

HIGH TIMES: Is that big press in England? Were you two the Andy Gibb and Victoria Principal of England? [laughter] Helen, were you giggling in rock bands or something?

HELEN O'HARA: Well, I was at music college where I met Kevin. I was playing very unpopular music.

HIGH TIMES: So he stole you right out of school—

O'HARA: Very much so.

I was in the last year at college and I was catching a bus to go to college and Kevin used to wait at that bus stop as well.

ROWLAND: I was going to practice. . .

O'HARA: . . . and he began telling me about. . . well, I just thought he was chatting me up—he was saying something about Dexys, who I hadn't heard of at all. And he asked if I'd try some fiddle ideas with his band. Which I wasn't interested in, so I said no.

And then he found out where I lived and followed me home one night and dropped a tape off which I listened to and really liked, so I rang him up.

ROWLAND: Yeah, we had a pretty strong idea once we got Helen. We said, "Look, this is how we want it to sound," and Helen said, "Well, you should try three violins. . . that would give you a better sound." And we did and it worked. But I think it was already swinging anyway, because the rhythm section was strong. Seb is really good, and the bass player is good, and Billy the guitarist, believe it or not, is a really important part of it—guitar and banjo.

HIGH TIMES: In the videotape, the overalls and the whole street-urchin type of persona that you guys affect. Is that calculated, and if so, for what reason?

ROWLAND: It was very real at that time, it was calculated to a certain extent. We wanted to have an image, you know. An image is an important thing to us. We liked the idea of wearing something and dressing up.

HIGH TIMES: Dressing up?

ROWLAND: Yeah. It fit in with the

music. It put it over well, you know.

HIGH TIMES: I heard everybody in England is dressing like that now.

ROWLAND: There's quite a lot, yeah. But, you see, fashion was becoming so boring in England, as well. It was gold suits and everybody had their hair, you know, all chic. We were sick of that, anyway. But we don't wear the overalls anymore now.

HIGH TIMES: We noticed. Now it's white T-shirts?

ROWLAND: No.

HIGH TIMES: But you've gone through a lot of permutations, right? I mean, since the band started. There was a period where you wore jogging suits.

ROWLAND: Yeah, that was in '81.

HIGH TIMES: What was that all about? Were you thinking of doing an aerobic record?

ROWLAND: Exercise record. Great idea.

HIGH TIMES: You banned alcohol at gigs then—

ROWLAND: We did, yes. It was genuine, you know. Looking back in hindsight you can see all things in place, but at the time it was the most important thing to us, not to be drinking, and to be doing the running and stuff. We wore gray trousers, boxing boots, white T-shirts, hoods and we tied our hair in ponytails.

We used to wear the hoods up quite a lot, some of us did. I think the music was very spiritual then, it was a bit more spiritual, so we had a lot of the monastic feel, you know, of the hoods, and also because it was still very physical, though, so there was the boxing boots and all that. And we did this show, called the Projected Passion Revue, and at that time we were doing songs like "Let's Make This Precious" and also "Until I Believe in My Soul." It was definitely quite a bit darker in '81 than it was in '82, so the image, again, was right. It just happened.

HIGH TIMES: The last album is shot through with strong religious feeling. Augustinian stuff, orthodox Roman Catholic-type stuff. What's your background?

ROWLAND: Heavy Catholic.

HIGH TIMES: Did you go to one of those English public schools, with the caning and all that?

ROWLAND: Oh, yeah, yeah. There was plenty of that.

HIGH TIMES: You evoke it beautifully on the second album.

ROWLAND: It had a big effect. I don't know what you can say about it, really. It's all there; everything I

wanted to say about it is there, but... it has a fucking big effect on me, it really does.

HIGH TIMES: There's one song on your second album—"I'll Show You"—were those the type of kids you grew up with?

ROWLAND: That's a sequel to a song called "Show Me." It was a single in between the two LPs, in England, it was never released here.

Yeah, they were the kind of kids who, at my school—well, you probably had them at your school—were just kind of always the brightest-looking kids, you know, the best clothes, they had girlfriends, rings and everything, flashy, good at sports, a bit tough, and you think they would be the kids who would do things, but very often they didn't. I didn't think it was particularly funny, but—

HIGH TIMES: Your publicist told us, "You're not going to ask him anything about drugs?" We have such an image at **HIGH TIMES** that people think all we're going to be talking about is drugs.

So where did the name Dexys come from?

ROWLAND: Dexedrine.

HIGH TIMES: You want to talk about that or not?

ROWLAND: [laughter] It was important to us at the beginning of the group, I never have 'em now. It was a very '60s drug. We got a lot of our inspiration from '60s songs. It was a drug in England that was associated with the Mods, or whatever. People who were into that kind of music were very much into Dexedrine.

HIGH TIMES: How is the band run? Is it a democracy? If Helen comes up with an idea, does the group follow her, or do you exercise autocratic control?

ROWLAND: If anybody has an idea, usually their ideas get rejected. Seriously I think it's pretty democratic in some ways, wouldn't you say, Helen?

O'HARA: I wouldn't say it's exactly democratic.

ROWLAND: Yeah. I'm definitely the leader. There's no doubt about it.

O'HARA: He's definitely the leader, and if you have an idea and it's considered any good, it's used.

ROWLAND: But they have to be good ideas.

O'HARA: You wouldn't get anywhere with a democratic group, would you? Wishy-washy groups like that—

ROWLAND: Boring, aren't they?

O'HARA: Their music generally sounds like

ROWLAND: ... like a democracy.

Bits of everything really. The guitarist writes one song and it sounds like one group; keyboard player writes another one—

HIGH TIMES: The second album was Kevin Rowland and the Midnight Runners, not just the Midnight Runners. Was there a big change in the group?

ROWLAND: Yeah, there was quite a big change. What happened was, before the LP came out, two or three people left the band. So, for the second time, there were quite a few people leaving Dexys. It struck me that with all these musicians coming and going people would lose interest in who the fuck was in Dexys, anyway. So I started to give it a bit of central focus, calling it Kevin Rowland and his Dexy Midnight Runners, and also to be fair to myself, because I knew I wasn't going to leave, I'd always be there, and everybody else was always fucking leaving—and it affected me too much.

HIGH TIMES: I was in London recently, and I was really surprised at how grim things had gotten over there. I mean, it was really down.

ROWLAND: It's changing. I can remember being a kid, going up to London. I used to take days off and go up to the West End of London and walk around. It used to be so exciting. It was such a strong place, you know, and you'd see the red buses and the police and the fucking buildings looking so strong and powerful. And Jesus, it used to have a big effect. I'd just look at it all day long. For ages I did that. Now you can start to really see the cracks.

O'HARA: Shabby. It's dirty.

HIGH TIMES: What did you study in school?

ROWLAND: I didn't go to any university or anything. I left school at fifteen.

HIGH TIMES: And then what did you do?

ROWLAND: Various jobs. A hundred different jobs.

HIGH TIMES: Were you always singing?

ROWLAND: Oh, no, I didn't start singing or playing music until I was about twenty-one.

HIGH TIMES: So from fifteen to twenty-one you were—

ROWLAND: I was usually concerned with getting out of the job I was in and trying to find one that I liked, you know. I couldn't find one. I tried, I tried to find a job I liked, without success. Just menial tasks. I mean, I tried working in an office. I tried

building and all sorts of stuff...
working in a shop.

HIGH TIMES: Were you writing, I don't know, poems, or song lyrics during this time?

ROWLAND: Yeah, bits and pieces, but I never thought of using them, really I'd never really thought of a way of doing it. I knew I'd like to do something like that. I was just searchin' as well. I used to move around the country, just living in different places in England.

HIGH TIMES: By yourself?

ROWLAND: By myself, essentially, yeah.

HIGH TIMES: So how did you become involved with music?

ROWLAND: When I was twenty-one I moved to Birmingham. That was just the next place to go. My brother was living there, he was at a teachers' training college and he suggested I come down there. He had a house.

I'd tried everywhere else, every other city, so I thought, well, okay, I'll go there, and after the first couple of weeks I was going to leave, but he was in a group, playing on the weekends, you know, just social-club music, covering top-forties in pubs. Their guitarist was leaving in six months' time and my brother told me to come down in six months and do it, so I did and that was it.

HIGH TIMES: How did you get that unique voice? Did you just open your mouth at twenty-two and say, "Holy shit, I can sing like a motherfucker"? How did that happen?

ROWLAND: I don't know I think pretty quickly I started singing, straightaway, as soon as I learned a few chords, I was singing. And my brother used to be the singer in the group, but I kind of elbowed him out of the way, so I'd do the singing. After a while I decided to form my own group, and that was it.

HIGH TIMES: What kind of neighborhood did you come from?

ROWLAND: It was just a bit like... pretty Irish background, as far as people living round there.

HIGH TIMES: Middle class?

ROWLAND: Working class, very definitely.

HIGH TIMES: Big family?

ROWLAND: Yeah. Five kids.

HIGH TIMES: Were you the black sheep?

ROWLAND: I'm afraid so. It's an awful cliché, but I was. Extremely so.

HIGH TIMES: So what did your parents think about you leaving school at fifteen and essentially bumming

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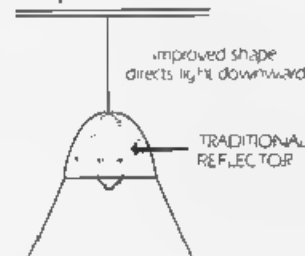
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around for six years. Was that a big deal?

ROWLAND: They weren't very pleased about it. They thought I should do something else.

HIGH TIMES: And now?

ROWLAND: I'm not quite sure how they feel now. Amused, probably. I'm sure they're proud of me.

HIGH TIMES: Well, they must be. They see thousands of kids walking around in ripped overalls.

So, what's your next incarnation?

ROWLAND: Incarnation?

HIGH TIMES: After the overalls.

ROWLAND: The overalls. We aren't even wearing those anymore, really. We're right at the end of that phase now.

HIGH TIMES: How exactly does that work? Do you wake up, like, one morning, snap your fingers and say, "Overalls!"?

ROWLAND: Oh, no. It's more like getting one idea and then we put another idea together and then it's built on a bit and then we work on it.

HIGH TIMES: Are you working on a new record now, or something?

ROWLAND: Working on new ideas, yes. There won't be another LP until

next year.

HIGH TIMES: Your songs stand in stark contrast to the fashionable nihilism of punk and hardcore.

ROWLAND: I don't know nihilism. Why do you call it nihilism? Punk is far too aggressive for me. It's too negative, isn't it?

HIGH TIMES: Well, that's what I'm saying.

You seem to come off as somebody who's essentially conservative, cautioning, "Don't fuck up, be careful who you sleep with and don't take drugs," as opposed to ranting on about how it all sucks anyway, so we might just as well shave all our heads and worship Alistair Crowley.

ROWLAND: That's the next stage.

Listen, I used to drink and all stuff like that, take drugs. It just occurred to me one day that I don't have to be a fucking drunk all my life, staggering about. So one day I thought I'd do something else. But I don't see it as a crusade—it's a personal thing, you know.

HIGH TIMES: But you must realize that, if you express your feelings through a pop record, there are certain sociological consequences.

ROWLAND: Like what?

HIGH TIMES: Like a thousand kids running around in overalls, saying, "I want to find my soul."

ROWLAND: I don't think it's that provocative, really. I think it's enough to give them the record, or to have people come along and see the show or whatever. I'm not sure you can actually say, "That's how you're supposed to react to it." To have that kind of control is fucking incredible.

HIGH TIMES: So what type of effect are you looking for with your records?

ROWLAND: Well, to me it's a whole thing. I'm trying to make the whole thing as complete as possible, a really uplifting experience that means something. The ideas in there are genuine, all the lyrics are genuine: I believe in all of them; there's no bullshit, there's no lies in there. I'm not just writing things because they rhyme, you know. They're things that I believe in.

Records are inspiring, for me they are, anyway. A good record—you can play it and feel really good if you're lonely, or whatever. It's a good thing to have a record that you really believe in, that's a good record, not just a fucking pile of shit. □

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A TALK WITH TARKOVSKY

Acclaimed as one of the greatest of contemporary filmmakers, Andrei Tarkovsky has struggled throughout his career against the heavy hand of Soviet censorship.

By any standards, the Russian film director Andrei Tarkovsky is an artist of prodigious credentials. His very first feature, *Ivan's Childhood*—completed before Tarkovsky was 30—took the Grand Prizes at three different international film festivals, and his five films since have all scooped up major citations from the most prestigious film festival of all, the Cannes. Even more impressively, Andrei Rublev despite an extremely limited release and over four years of blanket censorship by the USSR, was selected as the twelfth best film of all time on the last Sight and Sound International Critics' Poll (only slightly behind competitors like *Citizen Kane*, *The Rules of the Game*, *Persona* and *The Seventh Seal*).

And it's clear that Tarkovsky's six films might have won even more honors if not for his persistent problems with Soviet film-industry censors. For example, in 1975 the Soviets refused to submit Tarkovsky's *The Mirror* to the Cannes Festival, though they were told by screening judges that it was a likely Grand Prize winner. And both Andrei Rublev and *Solaris* won their awards years after their initial releases; Rublev, now widely regarded as a major classic, nearly destroyed Tarkovsky's directorial career after government censors objected to the violence, sexuality and "historical falsifications" in what was an obviously fictionalized portrayal of a legendary medieval Russian icon painter, about whom little is actually known.

Tarkovsky is so little seen (to date, *Solaris* and *Ivan's Childhood* are the only films of his to have even a regular art-house release in the United States) that his stature and frustrations loom even larger. He is, in fact, exactly what his numerous awards would imply: one of the greatest of all contemporary film directors—the legitimate heir (along with Sergei Paradjanov) of the great Russian film tradition of Eisenstein and Dov-

zhenko (a tradition that was virtually destroyed and dismantled by Stalin in the '30s and '40s). He is a director of unusual integrity, power and passion. Visually, his films are stunning. It is quite possible that he has the finest eye for composition of any living filmmaker; his unique style—which combines extremely long takes with deep-focus photography, an often ceaselessly moving camera and almost rapturously beautiful, painterly compositions—creates an atmosphere both compelling and hypnotic. Tarkovsky's films seem longer, slower, more intense than even the most ambitious films of his contemporaries, and they create a universe of almost overpowering strangeness and beauty.

His story lines are seemingly opaque but impregnated with an awesome emotional force and yearning. He has specialized in "science fiction" (*Solaris*, based on a Stanislaw Lem novel, and *Stalker*), history and war (*Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev*), and intimate personal revelations (*The Mirror* based on the lives of his parents; *Nostalghia*,

his newest film and one of his most physically beautiful, is an Italian-Russian co-production which deals with the yearning of a Russian visitor in Italy for his homeland). Its themes are the struggles of the artist with his society (a constant current in Tarkovsky's work) and the inability of pure good to survive or persevere in the modern world.

All six of the films are remarkable. The best, I think, are Andrei Rublev, *Stalker* and *Nostalghia*—and I would agree with the Critics' Poll assessment that places Andrei Rublev (a really staggering film; a turbulent fresco about spiritual struggle in a dark age) high among all the world's movies to date. Since most of you will have had no chance to see anything by Tarkovsky, and since his very strangeness and slowness may be enough to alienate the casual viewer, this interview and brief tribute are intended as appetite-whetters.

The interview was conducted through a translator at Tarkovsky's hotel room. The translator was Albert Todd.

HIGH TIMES: What happened to the



Oleg Yankovsky recedes into the eerie landscape of *Nostalghia*



Milena Vukotic is *Nostalghia's* seductively un-Russian heroine

distribution of *Andrei Rublev*? Why has it been so difficult to see it, both in Russia and in the West?

ANDREI TARKOVSKY: Even today I do not know the full story of what happened. When the film was first made it was reviewed within the film industry, and everyone considered it to be a very good film. But, at that moment when it was supposed to be sent to the Cannes Film Festival, everything suddenly changed, and for five years it sat on the shelf. But what it means I really don't know. Perhaps somebody in high places made a decision that there is another interpretation of this film that we have to look at it more carefully. I don't know, I'm just guessing. For six years after that, I wasn't able to work. I can't explain what it is that happened. I just don't know.

HIGH TIMES: During those six years did you submit projects that were rejected by the industry?

TARKOVSKY: Yes, for six years it was considered a harmful or undesirable film; nothing was accepted. I wasn't able to work. Of course, I made many proposals, but they were rejected. Unfortunately, I was made offers for the film [*Andrei Rublev*], but there was nothing I could do about it,

because the film was in "disgrace." It was very difficult at the time.

It's a great problem. When you want to say what you feel in film, it means people are going to hear your very personal, very private... your own statement, and there are great difficulties, of course, in realizing the transmission of one's personal vision, one's personal statement, into the film—which must, necessarily, affect millions of people.

It's like when a poet wants to do his thing, and he's not allowed to. He's required to do something else; find a new occupation, another activity. It's simply impossible.

HIGH TIMES: What finally broke the six-year "hiatus" after *Andrei Rublev*?

Was it general acceptance by Russian audiences, or your prestige abroad?

TARKOVSKY: *Andrei Rublev* had already been sold before the "scandal." It was already sold abroad. It was shown outside the competition at the Film Festival some time later. It obtained a prize, although it was not in the regular competition; it was really a great sensation. That helped—making it necessary to reconsider the decision about the film.

HIGH TIMES: How strange is a movie like *The Mirror* for the average

Russian audience?

TARKOVSKY: I was concerned, because it was very personal, very autobiographical. I thought they probably wouldn't be interested; but on the contrary, I found that the average Russian really accepted and received the film very easily. The audience received my films with great enthusiasm. I get an awful lot of letters about them. And what they ask in these letters is such questions as:

"Where did you, the filmmaker, come to understand our lives so well?"

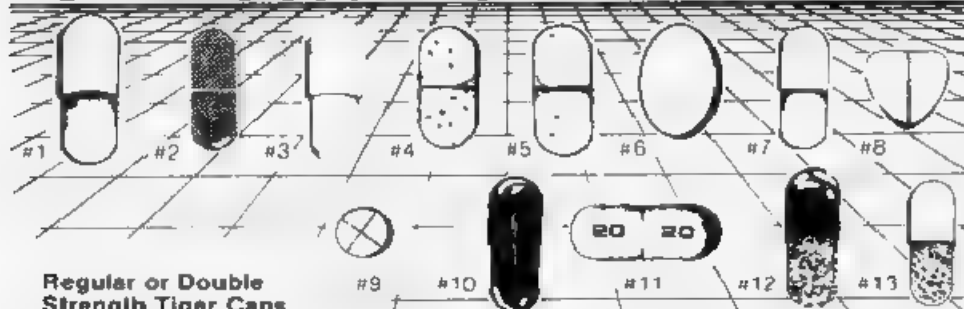
You've got to try to understand the truth. When it concerns you personally, and privately, and intimately... nonetheless, you cannot help but touch another person.

HIGH TIMES: Technically, *Ivan's Childhood* is an astonishing first film. How were you able to accomplish it?

TARKOVSKY: The technical problems are not big problems for someone who has something to say. If you don't have anything to say, then the technical problems become big problems.

HIGH TIMES: Your films, like Kenji Mizoguchi's, have many extremely beautiful and complicated "long takes," such as the scene with the candle in the drained pool at the end of *Nostalghia*. What about the prob-

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lems involved in such complex scenes? TARKOVSKY: Of course, a long take is much, much harder. It appears that you're saving time by shooting them, but you're actually not. But I still don't think that's a technical problem; it's a problem of the specific parameters of what it is you're saying. The specifics of it; not the technical apparatus. It's through the rhythm of a film that a filmmaker expresses himself.

HIGH TIMES: What about the problems of rhythm then? Your films tend to have a slower, more deliberate rhythm than other directors. How can you be sure that the audience will be seduced by your tempo?

TARKOVSKY: It's precisely the way you do pull in the audience through the long takes; because you compel them to live within it, to participate. You can't [enter] as well into things made up of little tiny clips; you don't get into it. Films made up that way—of brief, tiny snippets of film—really aren't works of art.

The art, for me, lies in putting together portions and pieces in which time lives... putting together portions that make up a sense of time. And if your editing is done correctly, your sense of cutting, your sense of time, the film works in an emotional way. If you take the conception that you take one scene in juxtaposition with another scene, for purposes of producing something—a third, a result—that's another art.

HIGH TIMES: What about your own *The Mirror*, which fragments time and uses many startling juxtapositions?

TARKOVSKY: In *The Mirror*, it was in the evolutionary creation or development of emotional sensation, not in the production of a symbol, or something abstract... not in the game of creating signs and symbols, mathematics and semiotics.

HIGH TIMES: So, you would be disturbed at overly allegorical interpretations of your films?

TARKOVSKY: I don't see these symbols in my films. I don't see these allegories. I reject them totally. A symbol, after all, has an elliptic significance. As soon as a viewer perceives the meaning of a symbol, he stops being interested in what's going on. What I'm talking about is "images," not "symbols." An image has an unlimited number of possible interpretations... precisely as in Zen culture. There's an endless possibility in interpreting the image. HIGH TIMES: It's interesting, following that line of thought, that

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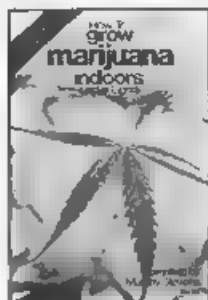
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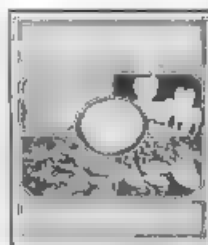
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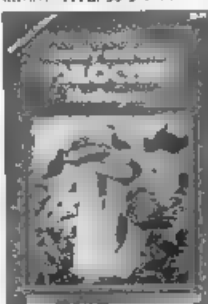
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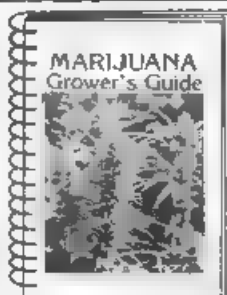
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most of your films are set in the past, or in the future, and yet all of them have striking applications to the present. To a certain extent, it's a way of speaking indirectly. Or is it?
TARKOVSKY: No artist can go from himself, or from his times. No one can do a retrospective, or repetition of the past. You just can't do it. Whether you talk about the past, or about the future, the only thing you can really talk about is yourself. You cannot recreate that past, or precreate that future; either way you're talking about the past, the meaning of what you're talking about lies in yourself...

HIGH TIMES: Well, maybe I'm just sneaking up on this question. I'll ask it directly. Would there be any problem in applying your methods—which are very subtle and allusive and poetic and critical—to a story set in the contemporary Soviet Union? Is there an external or political reason for choosing subjects set in the distant past or the future?

HIGH TIMES: *The Mirror*, *Stalker* and *Nostalgia* were really all films about today, they're not "past," "present," "future" films. I have not chosen the past or the future as a means of invading the problems of the present. I don't see a great deal of difference between the past and the future.
HIGH TIMES: Could you talk about the genesis of *Andrei Rublev*? How did you fix on this particular character, and why did you develop him as you did?

TARKOVSKY: There are two aspects. There's the fact of making a film, the idea of making a film. You say, "Let's make a film." They say, "Fine, let's make a film. That's a great idea." And so we did it. But I have a continuing interest, philosophical in character, about the past, and about the fact that the past and the present are very "open"... they are the same... There is a philosophical approach I was prepared for that made *Rublev* immensely interesting to me. But you can make a film about anything; the plot, the story, is not the critical issue; as long as there is, within it, the possibilities of introducing your own perceptions, your own understanding and your own ideas.

HIGH TIMES: Apparently little is known about the real Andrei Rublev. How much did you fabricate, and what did you keep?

TARKOVSKY: Of course I read an awful lot of all the files and historical materials—and, of course, there is the matter of our fantasy. □

DEA STING

/ continued from page 79

too—for thinking about it. About a drug that only exists on paper.

"Do you mean to tell us," Kalamazoo defense attorney Joseph Jerkins asked DEA agent Mel Schabillon of Universal Solvents, under cross in *U.S. v. Peterson* last year: "Do you mean to tell us that you would have taught these people, who didn't have the knowledge, how to make methamphetamine, and given them the necessary precursor chemicals and so on?"

"If it had come down to that," Agent Schabillon responded, "I would have went there and made it for them myself."

He damned well would have, too, and it probably would have stood up anywhere in America except the Deep South, where Schabillon personally has already gotten the judges to draw the line. In early spring of 1980, a 21-year-old college kid named Thomas Tobias, with no priors of any sort, with a wife and family in Mobile, Alabama, answered an ad in *HIGH TIMES*...

(Like I say, I don't generally mention defendants' names here, because it can make trouble for them. But there isn't too much more trouble anybody could possibly make for Thomas Tobias. Agent Mel Schabillon got Tobias 12 years in jail and 10 more afterward on supervised parole.)

Yes, in early 1980, Thomas Tobias answered an ad for chemical literature in *HIGH TIMES* magazine. When Schabillon's erstwhile DEA sting outfit, then called "Precision Organic Chemicals" of Alsip, Illinois, got hold of him, Tobias said he was interested in learning about the synthesis of cocaine. "Mel Saunders"—Schabillon's *nom du merde*—explained to Tobias how impossibly difficult and expensive that would be, and called his attention to the comparative simplicity and cheapness with which phencyclidine can be made.

Now, you really ought to call Universal Solvents of America and talk to this son of a bitch about dope-making some time. He can make it sound like a wild and romantic adventure all by itself, with the added element of getting one out of debt overnight. So it did not take much effort for DEA special agent Mel Schabillon—this great old narc who's been enforcing dangerous drugs ever since the good old days of the BNDD—to get this 21-year-old kid in Alabama to accept a shipment of cyclohexanone, piperidine and whatever other garbage is necessary for Angel

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In fact, Schabillon sent Tobias and his wife enough garbage to make 300,000 hits of Dust, which shows you how much the Tobias family knew about chemistry, and about Angel Dust and the demand for it. And then, over the week it took them to make a cup of the stuff, Schabillon contributed his "technical assistance" to Tobias, over the phone, no less than 13 times! As soon as the kid had a cup of it on hand he was busted, and when he went before the judge to be sentenced, after the trial, it went like this

The Court: Mr. Tobias, do you realize how much damage three hundred thousand units of PCP could have wreaked on this community?

Defendant: Yes, your honor.

The Court: Do you realize how much hard—I don't know what the term ought to be—how much pain and suffering that parents would have gone through with that being made available to their children?

And so this kid went away for a dozen years, because DEA agent Mel Schabillon sent him enough Dust fixin's to trank out the whole U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which upheld the conviction. But they did state in their decision that "this case does set the outer limits to which the government may go in the quest to ferret out and prosecute crimes in this circuit."

So, if Agent Schabillon ever does go to someone's house in the Deep South—the fifth-circuit's bailiwick—and cook up a batch of crank, and then try to bust someone for it, he just might go up for crank-making himself. Or he might just go up anyhow, over this still-unresolved matter of an audioless videotape submitted in evidence by the DEA in *U.S. v. Peterson*. Whenever and wherever this dirt-bag may go in the fullness of time, let's hope Thomas Tobias is not still there; things must be depressing enough for that kid, wherever he is, without the presence of ghouls like Mel Schabillon.

People often ask why the Drug Enforcement Administration does all these stupid, horrible, criminal things. Well, they say they perceive it as part of their "mission"—as they always grandiloquently refer to their congressional charter—of keeping "dangerous drugs" off the street market. In the past, right after the DEA was first chartered in 1973, their Diversion Control branch did truly achieve some marvelous suc-

cesses in drying up the street market in pharmaceutical speed and downers, by putting the screws to the big drug companies who were "losing" literally billions of interesting dose-units every year. It was confidently expected, after that wholesale DEA success, that the bathtub chemists of the nation would fill up the demand vacuum for synthetic dope, by cooking up crystal crank and exotic petroleum-based opiates, but alas, these chemists turned out to be uniformly inept and wholly disorganized, so there really hasn't been a great big national dangerous-drugs problem these last eight years or so. When was the last time you saw a good fat glassie full of crystal crank or mescaline? When was the last time, having seen and smelled any of that home-cooked garbage you wanted to buy any, or even try any for free?

Well, it hasn't been for want of trying on the DEA's part. Operation Optimal, as described in the DEA's 1984 budget request to Congress, involves the "establishment of proprietary chemical companies which offer precursors for sale to illicit drug manufactures [sic]." That's all they've ever said about it for the public record, except for sundry court records. Their alms-begging budget writers do not advise Congress that this project involves planting ads for these proprietary companies in college newspapers all over the country, so's to catch the eye of every bright, reckless, slightly daft young chem major who believes he knows everything there is to know about organic chemistry, but doesn't even know the meaning of the word "conspiracy" as it's taught in law school. They do not mention that this project involves 15-year veteran narcs instructing criminals like me in exactly how to make dope, over the phone, hoping they'll hear the word "Yes" come back through their tape recorders. Operation Optimal, as it's described in the 1984 DEA budget request, hardly sounds like a properly 1984-ish police operation at all.

In fact, George Orwell himself could probably never have conceived of a police operation so sinister and so stupid all at once. "Do you want to make it easier for drug chemists?" Compliance investigator Al Lavetta of the FDA asked me, the day last July, when I turned in all these Operation Optimal sting companies to the FDA. On the very same day, DEA public-information slack Ted Swift asked the very same question of the *New York Times* reporter who worked on the story. "How do you answer that one?" she asked me for the

record.

"This doesn't have anything to do with real drug chemists," I responded for the record. "Real narcotics chemists do not answer ads for precursor chemicals through mail-order firms that advertise in mass-market magazines. They go to perfectly legitimate chemical-supply firms and bribe their legitimate bookkeepers or set up front companies to legitimize their chemical purchases. This operation doesn't even begin to address that sort of felony, because these stings are so obvious, no real criminal would even bother to bribe these cop dummies."

Ted Swift had also warned that if the *Times* blew this operation to the world, some of the DEA's undercover people might get hurt.

"If it were any other police agency," I said, "I wouldn't worry a bit about that. I told them a week ago that I was on this story I named their damn sting firms to them a week ago, one by one, and today those clucks are still answering the phones at every one of them. This story stumbled onto me. It landed in my lap. I know about it all, and so do a whole bunch of defense lawyers. Criminal-defense lawyers! This operation has no security, and it never had any security. It's stupid, mortally stupid. If they've got snitches out working on cases through these sting labs, then their lives were already in danger long before you or I heard about this story. But the damn DEA doesn't care about their confidential informants, whether they live or die."

In fact the DEA doesn't worry itself much over the welfare of innocent, bystanding taxpayers, either. When people get busted through police advertisements in their favorite magazines, they tend to take that pretty personally. To her credit, the classified-advertising manager of *Popular Science* reacted initially with indignation when I advised her that her classifieds were contaminated with cop ads for impossible dope chemicals: "Why, that's entrapment!" she exclaimed. When I mentioned that some of the defendants thus entrapped were liable to subpoena her records—and hinted that some of them might be fairly nasty, violent, revengeful sorts of people—she clammed right up, though. She probably has a family, y'know. Believe it or not, even some of the individuals who work at *HIGH TIMES* have families, and people who are personally fond of us. But the DEA obviously doesn't give a coasting damn about any of that, even while it spends our tax money on monstrosities like Operation Optimal. □

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